

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

31-
1930

JUNE 1930

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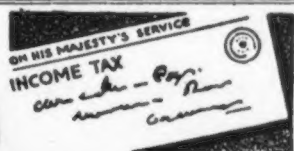
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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

June, 1930

Correspondence

The Sadlers Wells Theatre

To the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW.

SIR,—May I make the position with regard to the opening of Sadlers Wells clear to your readers?

When our last appeal (signed by the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Lytton, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson, and Sir Arthur Pinero) was issued, it pointed out that the actual structural alterations could be finished in six weeks, and that only a minimum of £8,500 for equipment and as a small working capital was needed to ensure the opening of the Wells with the Vic next September.

Since then £2,500 has been collected—chiefly in small sums from the ever-generous members of the Old Vic audience.

It is clear that a company and staff cannot be got together at a moment's notice, and that I cannot issue any contracts for next season until I know definitely whether they are to cover work at the Vic only (in that case the opera artists cannot be offered whole-time engagements) or at the two theatres (in which case they can). At the meeting of the Governors at the end of April, therefore, I was forced to say that if the balance of £6,000 had not been raised by the date of the next meeting, May 28, the opening of the Wells would have to be postponed.

I should hate to be obliged to admit defeat after over thirty years of management here, but I cannot undertake the running of a second theatre until its finances are on a satisfactory basis.

Any contributions should be sent to me at the Old Vic.

Yours, etc.,

LILIAN BAYLIS.

Old Vic,

Waterloo Road, S.E.1.

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To the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW.

SIR,—The review in your last issue of the life of Carry Nation points to the emotional instability of to-day. Surely we have enough of this of the home-made variety without importing so much of it from the United States in the shape of "sob-stuff" in songs and film plays. Everywhere I go, I hear some crooning and soppy sentimentalism of the nigger sort played by a gramophone. These performers figure at the head of our English shows, and it seems difficult to-day for an English writer or composer of songs to get a fair chance of being heard. I suppose it is a temporary fashion only; but I wish more people had the courage to stand up against it.

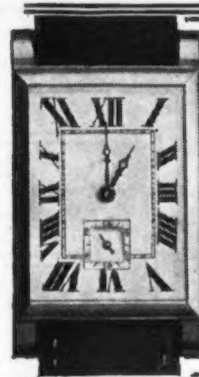
It is the same with the film plays. Some moaning, mooning stuff, delivered by a desperately bereaved father or a sickly lover who can't do without his "baby," is advertised as the "best ever," and people who do not want it have to endure it. The words are often indistinguishable—that is the one comfort. There is now a fuss, I

see, about the film quota, and we are expected to encourage the magnates of Hollywood to bring their melodramatic establishments out here. Why, in the name of Apollo and all the Muses? The cinema was not an American invention, and has been degraded by American practice. Everyone knows that

it is more of a business than an art; but cannot English people manage a business? You notice in this same number the strange ideas of American college life which Mr. Leacock parodies, and say that we have seen enough of it on the cinema. We have, indeed. One need not be a Puritan to be surprised at the chief education of the young as there presented. Unfortunately what may be expected from the censorship in the way of control is little.

Yours, etc.,

AN ENGLISHMAN.



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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

JUNE, 1930

Current Comments

WE are able to-day to contemplate with an entire absence of satisfaction the results, pre-ordained, necessary, and predicted, of the follies of the last fifteen

**By Their
Fruits**

months at home and abroad. We see India in revolt, Egyptian affairs at a deadlock, the inauguration of a fresh epoch of naval expansion in Europe, an increase of unemployment in England by the appalling figure of 600,000, and a budget imposing on the struggling industries of our country the largest amount of new taxation ever imposed in a single year by any country in time of peace. Those who like to complete the picture of our world to-day can add the story of China, Afghanistan, and Palestine, the record of futile bloodshed, growing poverty, and threatening European skies. THE ENGLISH REVIEW is not a blind party organ. We should have chronicled with pleasure the restoration of prosperity at home, of peace in Asia, of goodwill in Europe; above all, we should have welcomed that steady expansion of the area of ordered liberty out of which alone is born freedom and which is therefore the essential condition of progress. What we cannot write of without anger is the bovine stupidity of those in all three parties who, faced with this sombre and disastrous record, nevertheless adhere desperately and bitterly to the false philosophies, the sham moralities which are responsible for the present discontents.

WE profess to be a scientific generation. May we make an earnest appeal, then, to the prestige of the scientific method? A man working in a laboratory

**The Analogy
of Science**

seeks to produce a certain compound, and experiments with the necessary ingredients in certain quantities. He fails to get what he is looking for. What does he do? If he is a

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

politically-minded man, he tries again with the same ingredients in the same proportions, only he uses double the quantity of each. But if he is scientifically-minded, he checks his experiment carefully, and having satisfied himself of the facts discards it once and for all. The method of trial and error is costly and slow. But at least it is a method, and it bows to results. The political habit of ignoring results and bowing down only to *a priori* assumptions about human nature is mere folly. Human nature not being a measurable substance, it is often necessary to err once; it is pardonable to err twice, but it is criminal to go on erring indefinitely.

LET us consider for a moment the international problem, and let us kill one popular lie at the start. Differences

among politicians regarding foreign affairs
The Fruits of Pacifism are differences as to methods, not as to aims. The pacifist does not desire peace more firmly (nor, to be fair, less firmly) than the anti-pacifist. He merely fails to secure it. The anti-pacifist does not dislike war less than the pacifist. He merely says that wars can be prevented only by dealing with their causes, not by recounting their effects. If we look at the world to-day, we see the most convincing proof of these simple facts. The policy of sloppy surrender adopted by H.M. Government towards seditious or disaffected elements in India and Egypt has led to actual rebellion on the one hand and the actual breakdown of negotiations on the other. These are facts. For months those simple souls who asked for a resolute declaration of resolute intentions by the Cabinet have had to stand a fusillade of calculated insults. They have been described as backwoodsmen, ruffianly warmongers, or mere fools. In the sacred name of peace they have been maligned and derided. They have not objected. What they do object to, and with anger, is the continued complacency of those who, pursuing other tactics, have on their hands the guilt of innocent blood. It is these others who have incurred the shame of blood-guiltiness, a shame all the deeper because it has been incurred not out of any exaggerated notions of honour or duty, but in the desire for ease and comfort.

CURRENT COMMENTS

THE same thing, precisely and inevitably, has occurred in China. Since the break up of ordered Government in

China

China the one saving factor in the situation has been China's Treaty obligations, necessitating, as the alternative to foreign intervention, some pretence of a responsible Government, some tolerable, if erratic, standards of administrative efficiency. The wholesale surrender of Treaty rights by ourselves and other powers has not in practice given "freedom" or "liberty" or "self-determination" to the Chinese. It has merely given a free hand to the irresponsible militarists who dictate to the unfortunate masses. And the end is not yet. The enforced and ignominious surrender of the *de facto* Government to the armed forces of Russia has produced another internal crisis which may at any moment mean that the present era of intermittent brigandage is superseded by an era of admitted civil war. Thus does surrender breed aggression, and aggression, panic, and panic, the rule of force. And all the time we are asked to admire the dog-like devotion of Russia to the Kellogg Pact, of China to the democratic principles of Sun-yat-sen, of England to the principle of self-determination. The spectacle of so many ostriches in so much sand would be amusing if the sand were less blood-stained.

ON the home front we are faced with an equally dismal pertinacity in proved error. If an income tax of 10s. in the £ would cure unemployment we, being

The Home Front

neither rich nor covetous, would gladly pay it. The proved fact, however, is that the policy of relieving unemployment by increasing expenditure is a failure. The only solution which the Government offer is to go on spending in the hope that by some sudden and gracious reversal of the order of nature unemployment will suddenly begin to diminish instead of continuing to increase. If the apparently confident anticipation of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in a miraculous intervention by the Deity had been fulfilled, we should have been the first to rejoice. We can only register our contempt, however, for people who con-

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tinue to pretend that the conflict between Socialism and Conservatism to-day is a conflict between people who have a remedy for unemployment and those who have not. The precise opposite is the case. The Labour "cure" for unemployment has been shown *by its results* to increase unemployment, just as the Labour foreign policy of invertebrate negotiations and gestures has been shown, by its results, to produce rebellion, to stimulate the hostile ambitions of jealous rivals, and to bring the British Empire to the verge of forcible disruption.

It is pleasant to turn away from the follies of ideologues to more practical matters, and we will thus pause to consider the Fulham by-election. This was a victory for no party. It reflected, on the other hand, the growing disgust of ordinary people at the antics of the rival politicians. It showed, of course, that the Liberal party was in even worse case than had been imagined. Faced with a straight issue between Socialism and Protection, it disappeared in a cloud of recriminations. For the rest, the most striking feature was the total number of abstentions. The reason for this is perfectly clear. The official Conservative policy, as outlined in its leaflets and disseminated by the central office, is hardly more closely related to realities than is the policy of the Socialists. Conservatism is only saved from disaster in the constituencies by the initiative and courage of individuals who refuse to accept the confused dictatorship of their party headquarters. Every responsible man ought to know that the real cause of our difficulties is over-expenditure and under-production. Safeguarding, some measure of agricultural protection, and a sane policy of mutual give-and-take between ourselves and the Dominions will certainly provide conditions exceptionally favourable to a real grappling with both these prime evils. But nothing will avail *unless*, given the means, the will to put our house in order is strong enough to be translated into action. Until the country is satisfied on this point, the interest in politics will continue to decline.

CURRENT COMMENTS

PEOPLE in the long run will not bother about voting for candidates whom they know to be denying in public what they admit in private. The truth of

**The Truth
about the
Social
Services**

the matter is that responsible people of all parties know well that the social services are at the root of much of the unemployment. This remark could not have been made otherwise than in a controversial spirit a year ago. Mr. Thomas's speech in the House of Commons on the 19th of last month makes it to-day a matter of legitimate and sober comment. It is admitted, of course, and again by all parties, that there is a definite and permanent falling off in the markets of the heavy industries and the textile group. Even here, however, the social services have a direct responsibility. In the first place the enormous taxation placed on industry has depleted the capital reserves of big businesses by many millions and thus postponed, in some cases indefinitely, the essential re-equipment and re-building on which industrial progress depends. In the second place the social services tend to fix the unemployed in their own districts, and by thus swelling the burden of rates as well as the burden of taxation, they diminish the competitive power of industry at the very time when its difficulties are already almost insuperable. These two results of our present economic policy are, however, not the worst. The worst trouble arises not from the raising of the money but from the manner in which it is spent. The real problem is to restore the competitive quality of British industry *as a whole*, and this can never be done as long as the final responsibility for the maintenance of the standard of life is carried by the State and not by the individual.

It is the realization of this fundamental fact which has torpedoed the whole unemployment policy of the Government. The responsibility for the present

**Why the
Government's
Policy has
failed**

state of affairs is shared by all political parties, which accounts for the very gentle criticism which Mr. MacDonald's government has had to face from the Conservative front bench. It will be some time before any front bench dares to say in public that the unemployment

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problem is partly and indeed substantially the actual creation of the politicians. But the facts are known. The one piece of social legislation which has so far been fool-proof or fraud-proof is the Health Insurance scheme. Now that, too, has begun to crack. The Government Actuary's warning has impressed the Government, and steps are under consideration for tightening up the administration. But these steps will fail. The habit of drawing on public funds for private emergencies grows apace and cannot be stopped except by drastic methods. It is as foolish to blame the doctors as the insured persons. People will take what they can get. Just as the employers have contrived, by working short time, to get their wages subsidized by the State out of the alleged Unemployment Insurance Fund, so the doctors and their patients, in this new age of changed values and debased standards, are conniving to maintain an easy relationship at the expense of the Health Insurance Fund.

IN these matters figures are better than words. The table immediately below shows the percentage of the actual weeks of sickness and disablement benefit (in each year from 1921 to 1927) to the provision made for these benefits by the present valuation basis.

Percentage of weeks of Sickness to "Expectation."

Year.	Men.		Women.			
	Sickness Benefit.	Disable- ment Benefit.	Unmarried.		Married.	
			Sickness Benefit.	Disable- ment Benefit.	Sickness Benefit.	Disable- ment Benefit.
1921 ..	76	54	73	60	63	66
1922 ..	89	65	88	67	82	73
1923 ..	86	72	91	77	92	90
1924 ..	97	81	105	86	110	104
1925 ..	98	83	112	99	121	125
1926 ..	108	93	112	111	124	146
1927 ..	107	100	117	119	130	171

CURRENT COMMENTS

The effect of these figures is to show that, comparing 1927 with 1921, the following increases in the number of claims to benefit have taken place:—

Sickness Benefit—

The claims of men have risen by 41%.

The claims of unmarried women have risen by 60%.

The claims of married women have risen by 106%.

Disablement Benefit—

The claims of men have risen by 85%.

The claims of unmarried women have risen by 100%.

The claims of married women have risen by 159%.

THE following tables give further information, viz.:

- (a) the increase in claims to sickness benefit classified by
 Who is age, sex, and condition (married or un-
 Drawing the married), and (b) the duration of the
 Money, claims made by men between 16 and 64
 and Why in 1927 as compared with 1921.

TABLE (a).

Ages last birthday at beginning of year.		Sickness Benefit. Percentage of claimants to each 100 members within the age group.								
		Men.			Unmarried Women.			Married Women.		
		1921	1924	1927	1921	1924	1927	1921	1924	1927
16-19	..	14	21	24	12	20	22	46	74	77
20-24	..	13	19	23	13	20	23	27	44	50
25-29	..	13	18	21	11	17	21	19	37	41
30-34	..	13	18	21	11	17	19	17	33	39
35-39	..	13	19	21	11	16	18	17	31	37
40-44	..	14	19	21	11	18	19	16	31	34
45-49	..	14	21	23	12	19	20	17	32	34
50-54	..	16	22	24	13	19	21	20	30	34
55-59	..	20	25	26	15	21	22	22	30	31
60-64	..	23	29	29	16	23	24	27	33	32

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TABLE (b).

Analysis of Claims to Sickness Benefit by Men between 16 and 44 in 1921 and 1927.

Duration of the Claim in the Year. (1)	Ages 16-44.		
	Number of Claims.		Percentage* 1927 of 1921.
	1921	1927	
	(2)	(3)	(4)
Under 1 week	3,690	7,297	170
1 week and under 2 weeks ..	4,157	8,783	182
2 " " " 3 " " ..	2,087	4,549	188
3 " " " 4 " " ..	1,260	2,506	171
4 " " " 6 " " ..	1,523	2,618	148
6 " " " 8 " " ..	817	1,367	144
8 " " " 10 " " ..	521	868	143
10 " " " 13 " " ..	485	698	124
13 " " " 16 " " ..	319	408	110
16 " " " 20 " " ..	253	299	102
20 " " " 26 " " ..	242	276	98

* Computed with allowance for the increase in the numbers insured between 1921 and 1927.

THE evidence of these figures is cumulative and its implication quite unmistakable. Allowing, for instance, for the increase in the number of insured

What the persons, there has been an actual decrease
Figures Mean in claims in respect of continued sickness,
 compared with an increase of 70 per cent.
 in the claims for trivial sickness by able-bodied men.
 Even more significant is the lesson of Table (a). It
 must be remembered in reading this Table that a certain
 steady increase in sickness claims from men and women
 in the higher age groups was expected from the start, for
 the reason that, when the scheme was launched in 1912,
 it included no persons already disabled. Cases of per-
 manent invalidity would therefore inevitably accumu-
 late. Yet despite this natural tendency as affecting the

CURRENT COMMENTS

higher age groups we find that the percentage for men between the age 55 and 59 has risen only from 20 to 26, while that for men between 16 and 19 has risen from 14 to 24, and for married women between those ages from 46 to 77. There is in hard fact no doubt at all that these figures show a great increase in claims quite unrelated to any increase in ill-health, accompanied, indeed, by a steady expansion in national and local expenditure on public health, and closely related only to the economic circumstances of the insured persons. A continuance of this tendency will bankrupt the Health Insurance Fund inevitably and quickly. But it will do worse than that: it will combine with the other schemes of so-called insurance and assistance to bankrupt our industries by bankrupting the morality of the country.

It is just at this point that the difference between Mr. Thomas and Sir Oswald Mosley becomes clear.

Exit	Mr. Thomas's speech is explicit and direct
Sir Oswald	evidence that the policy laid down in
Mosley	"Labour and the Nation" of giving a fillip
	to industry by increasing the spending
	power of the people has been abandoned.

Is it unfair, is it indeed anything but necessary in logic, to regard this change of policy as an admission that the results of the policy, as far as it has gone, are wholly bad? I think not. Mr. Thomas does not, of course, say so in so many words. He merely confesses his inability to do anything by direct action to diminish unemployment, but it is crystal clear that, if the further distribution of public money in the direction of social services was regarded as likely to reduce unemployment, or even as being compatible with the limitation of unemployment to its present figure, such further distribution would have taken place. And why not? The gain to every industry from the re-absorption of 1,750,000 men and women into productive employment would obviously outweigh a hundredfold the disadvantage of further taxation. The fact is, of course, that, as we said above, it is now realized by all responsible parties that the effect of increased expenditure would be to *increase*, not to decrease, unemployment. Sir Oswald Mosley alone appears to differ.

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

BUT does he? Or is it rather that he is anxious to impose that last straw which will break the capitalist camel's back? For the sake of his reputation as a thinker, we hope this last interpretation of his action is correct. For the sake of his reputation as a man, we hope it is false. And we believe it to be false, for did not Sir Oswald Mosley announce a few months ago that he was going to repair "the havoc of the centuries"? A man who could believe that in good faith may believe anything.

MR. THOMAS tried to suggest that the Opposition's policy for unemployment was in effect the same as his—with the paltry and unimportant addition of "a little safeguarding." It would be just as sensible to say that a doctor treating a malaria case efficiently was doing no more than a layman who was not treating it at all, except that the doctor was giving "a little quinine." The vital importance of safeguarding is that it is the prerequisite of Mr. Thomas's own policy of restoring our industrial efficiency all round. For the purpose of enforcing rationalization, of facilitating the re-capitalization of certain industries, of meeting the situation arising out of lost Eastern markets by guaranteeing a market elsewhere until surplus labour can be otherwise absorbed, for all this safeguarding is not merely a possible policy but the only policy. The record of this government's conscientious, but still lamentable, failure to do anything at all is the proof of our contention.

It is apparently useless to ask those who wish for the truth about the war to read history. History has been the principal intellectual resource of all the great ages of culture, but to-day, I am told, we are different. The "modern mind" can only learn the real truth from fiction. Those, however, whose minds are not afflicted with the disease of modernity will do well to read Captain Liddell-Hart's "The Real War," which provides in one volume immeasurably the best conspectus of the naval, military and political events of 1914-18. It is possible to detect a slight anti-French bias, and, greatly daring,

CURRENT COMMENTS

I venture to think the contribution of the tank to the ultimate victory to be a little exaggerated. If Foch placed too high a value on will without material, it is still possible to go too far in the other direction, and it is certain that many of the decisive engagements of 1918, such, for instance, as the breaking of the Drocourt-Quéant switch, owed more to tactics than to tanks. But these are minor criticisms of a very fine book and an invaluable manual for all students of war.

As to those works of fiction which literary critics have elected to classify by a doubly ingenious paradox as war literature, the spate continues. It appears

**A Last Word
on War
Novels** that the "modern" novelist is as peculiar a phenomenon as the modern mind, being unable to deal in fiction form with the movements of armies, the ebb and flow of

war opinion or the synthesis of world events. A section, a platoon, or, if we are dealing with officers only, a company mess is the largest possible canvas. Dear, dear! It is all very sad. We need not, however, despair. There is no great novel which has not got over the elementary difficulty of the *genre*, which is to relate the particular to the general, and I, for one, do not believe that the race of great novelists is dead. Many of these sympathetic and painstaking studies of the ardours and agonies of individual members of the intelligentsia are interesting and poignant. They have historical value; they are human documents. For students of morbid psychology they are indispensable. For students of war they have a limited but definite value. But they do not deal with what are the mainsprings of human action even in this twentieth century. "It requires," said Conrad, "a certain greatness of soul to interpret patriotism worthily"; something remote from "the vulgar refinement of modern thought incapable of appreciating the august simplicity of a sentiment inherent in the nature of men and things." And to patriotism, which was not by any means enough (Conrad was not writing of the war when he wrote this), we may add all forms of disinterested service in a cause accounted noble, all sublimation of the individual instincts and desires, all true religion and all willing sacrifice.

Notes from Paris

By Roland Atkinson

M. Briand's Federation Plan.—The French Foreign Minister's scheme for a Federal Union of European States is undoubtedly the boldest conception which even he has placed before the statesmen of the world, and he has many grandiose ideas to his credit. It was he who initiated the Kellogg Pact by the proposal for a Pact of Amity with the United States of America. It was he who was principally responsible for the Locarno Agreement. And it is he who may be regarded as the author of the Mediterranean Pact, which was offered in vain to the London Naval Conference as one way of overcoming the difficulties separating France and Italy. But it seems fairly evident, from the preliminary reception accorded to the Federation Plan, that it is likely to meet with a similar fate to that of the Mediterranean Pact—that neither its boldness nor its generosity of inspiration will compensate for its drawbacks on the side of vagueness.

Europe Unready.—Of course, there is always the possibility that we may witness a change of heart in the camps to which this unquestionably noble appeal is addressed. Sometimes nobility of sentiment becomes catching, as in the case of President Wilson's rhetorical campaign for the formation of a League of Nations. And I recall that the Kellogg Pact was condemned at birth in certain capitals—London, in particular, providing a remarkable example of coat-turning when it was tardily appreciated that Washington was taking the matter seriously. But I have the feeling that there is no likelihood of any such "wave" of sentiment in regard to M. Briand's latest effort towards making the peoples of Europe more fraternal, and that the final verdict of Chancelleries and Parliaments will be even colder than the preliminary reception—which is certainly more courteous than enthusiastic. Europe is a long way from being ready for a Union that would require a common inspiration. Only a community of interests could create a community of hearts, and it is glaringly obvious that there is more clashing of interests than community.

Divided French Views.—Perhaps the plainest illustration of this opposition of interests is to be found in

NOTES FROM PARIS

France itself. A cleavage on the lines here revealed is a pointer to what may be expected from Europe as a whole, for opposite sides are being assumed quite definitely according to the party boundaries. Leaving out of count the Communists—for they do not really count except in electioneering periods—there are virtually only two political parties in France, despite the immense number of groups that make French politics appear so confusing to the British reader. These are best described as the Left and the Right, as, once you begin to talk of Conservatives and Progressives, Reactionaries and Radicals, etc., you fall among the labels which many of the groups have appropriated to themselves—in some cases quite unjustifiably. As for the folk who refer to themselves as Centrists, they are merely seeking to capture the best out of both spheres, and they have no views of their own till the lining up of the bigger battalion sounds their call. Well, the Left spontaneously approves of the plan of M. Briand, while the Right just as spontaneously deems it a waste of time and effort, condemned to vanish like a bubble when it hits against the hard realities of Continental rivalries.

Support Slight.—Where, then, can M. Briand look for the volume of support which he would need for the intense pressing forward of such a vast reorganising of Europe as his project involves? At home he secures a better "Press" than any other French politician, because, in addition to the political journals of the Left, he gets the backing of the border-line newspapers, which are those with the big circulations. But, while the support of the Paris Press is invaluable when there is a desire to bring a Government down, it has nothing like the same value when constructive campaigning is required. So, in France, the Foreign Minister will have to rely largely on his own efforts, and though he has wonderful powers of perseverance, I do not think he can rouse the country to fervour as Woodrow Wilson moved the masses when he led them to anticipate a new world of brotherly love in exchange for one where cannon glowered at cannon across an otherwise unrecognisable frontier.

Hostility Elsewhere.—From Britain it is doubtful if he will obtain much more than expressions of friendliness—and that mostly on personal grounds—for it is difficult

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to see where the scheme contains much of an appeal to Britain amid her present troubles. It may have an attraction for Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, seeing that the Geneva Protocol captivated him, but even Mr. MacDonald seems to be more wary about "commitments" than he was then. And it is hardly likely to entrance any but the "universalists" of the United Kingdom. The obvious weakness of the project, so far as Britain is concerned, is that the greater bulk of the British Empire is outside Europe. Possibly M. Briand assumes that the British Dominions have as little to say in the determination of British policy as the French Colonies have in respect of decisions made in Paris, but Downing Street will be under the necessity of emphasising this fundamental flaw in the plan when the official reply to the Memorandum is despatched. Then, on the other wing of France, there is Signor Mussolini, who embarked on perhaps his most hectic harangue on the very day when M. Briand's Memorandum was circulated, a coincidence which the Quai d'Orsay cannot regard as encouraging—to say the least.

Signor Mussolini.—The Duce's discourse is bound to be regarded as a "rejoinder in advance." So the prospects of Italian furtherance of the Federation idea appear virtually nil. There is a comment that one should not neglect in Signor Mussolini's speech at Florence, when he said that words are fine things, but muskets, machine-guns and cannons are finer. It is distinctly fortunate for the peace of mind of Europe that the Dictator's *vis-à-vis* in France is M. Aristide Briand and not M. Poincaré as he was in the days when he made a habit of answering German Nationalist spokesmen with just as much vigour as they employed. Two leaders thundering across a frontier would revive the pre-war uneasiness which very few wish to experience again. Words may not be very substantial, but it is only too often that they have caused cannons to go off. Happily, M. Briand has a way of considering that Signor Mussolini's discourses are intended mainly for Italian consumption and, as it takes two to make a quarrel, Franco-Italian relations remain unchanged. It is to be hoped that something can be done to improve them, since there is an evident need of it.

The Conservative G.H.Q.

By Ernest Remnant

IN the May number of this REVIEW, Colonel Cuthbert Headlam, Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty in the late Government, deplored the inertia of sections of the Conservative party which "under the cover of a wise and far-seeing statesmanship" desire to prolong the existence of the Socialist Government. In particular, he condemned those nominal Conservatives who, disregarding what they describe as merely political motives, profess to look upon the affairs of the nation with "disinterested detachment." The arguments advanced by these "disinterested" Conservatives, if accepted, might, as Colonel Headlam says, saddle the country with a Socialist Government for many years. Their curious suggestion is that, as evidently the Socialist Party has come to stay, it is for the common good that it should have its fair share of office and be allowed to benefit by the educative effects of administrative responsibility. Even risk of disastrous mishandling of the problems of National Defence, The Imperial Conference, India and Egypt, not to mention our internal economy, must be accepted with composure in the hope that possibly irremediable failure may at least "educate" our temporary masters. The hope is further indulged that administrative responsibility may result in that greatly-to-be-desired unity of outlook upon Imperial and Foreign policy. As real Conservative policy is fundamentally national and Imperial, as opposed to the frank internationalism of the Socialists, which would value relations with a loyal Dominion less than an illusory treaty with Russia, that hope is merely fantastic.

There is, perhaps, more substance in the argument that the wisest policy is to give the Government plenty of rope with which to hang themselves; time may disillusion their followers and produce an adequate reaction. But, again to quote Colonel Headlam, "to argue . . . that an Opposition should not attempt to defeat a Government on an important domestic issue so long as such negotiations [with Foreign Powers] remain unsettled simply because the supporters of the Govern-

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ment could not be depended upon to behave with discretion when in opposition, is to distort the principle of judicious forbearance into a policy of futile inactivity that might well put an end to the system of party Government as it has hitherto been understood in this Country."

I would add that, whatever may be the views of the "far-seeing" ones at Westminster, in the House, or at Palace Chambers, the fighting spirit of the party in the constituencies cannot be fed upon such Fabian tactics. Enthusiasm, even interest, will be killed by counsels of despair. They demand action, attack. Every Conservative worth his salt will agree with Colonel Headlam that it is the duty of the Party to expose and oppose the domestic policy of the Socialists of which it disapproves with the utmost vigour and determination, and to exercise with untiring vigilance its full right of criticism on their conduct of Foreign and Imperial affairs. But, as he says, "the Conservative Party is unfortunately not in a position to force an election." Unhappily a more serious admission must be made—the Conservative Party is not in a position *to face an election*.

Everyone who has had any experience of general elections knows that confidence in the Party G.H.Q. is one of the first conditions of victory. Most Conservatives, either in the House or working for the local organizations, have for a considerable time ceased to pretend that any such confidence remains. Most of us have refrained from public admission of the fact in the hope that its wide recognition would be followed by prompt and radical reform. These hopes have been disappointed until the talk of headquarters' inefficiency has now become so public that reserve is no longer possible and frank admission is more calculated to hasten the imperative reorganization than useless reticence.

A commercial agent who missed the market by quoting prices current of the previous week would lose his job. Yet weeks after Mr. Baldwin at the Hotel Cecil announced the terms of his agreement with Lord Beaverbrook, hundreds of thousands of leaflets ridiculing any such

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possibility were broadcast throughout the constituencies from the Conservative headquarters. Could ineptitude go further? The most devastating reply to Conservative criticism of the Socialist budget was Mr. Lloyd George's quotation of the notorious "Conservative" leaflet, "From the Cradle to Old Age"*—as profligate a vote-catching production as ever disgraced any party.

This precious pamphlet shamelessly out-Snowdened Snowden, promising that the insatiable appetite of the parasitic section of the electorate would be more generously satisfied by the Conservative party than even by the Socialists. In the face of such official and calculated Conservative propaganda what faith can the ordinary voter or Conservative worker have in platform promises of retrenchment by the party leaders?

In thus criticizing the headquarters organization, I do not impugn the Conservatism or the zeal of its chief. But an obvious loss of control has led to worse than weakness—almost to the domination of dangerous influences. If Mr. Baldwin is to carry the Party to victory, as I believe he can, his staff must be reorganized in time.

Palace Chambers needs a spring-clean. When the mops and brooms get to work, there will be found a vast accumulation of litter, some of it merely useless and obsolete, some infected with the germs of internationalism and defeatism spread by the League of Nations Union and other affiliated agencies for the weakening of the Empire. This taint can only be eradicated by a powerful antiseptic.

The Conservative Party is entitled to demand that its central organization shall be run efficiently. It disposes of a large income and its staff is presumably paid at rates which should command competence. Every active member of the party knows that a damning indictment of its incompetence might be published. It has allowed its initiative to be captured by an untrustworthy clique

* "During the lifetime of the present Conservative Government expenditure on Social Services by the State and Local Authorities increased by £50 millions—from £332 millions in 1924 to £382 millions in 1927." (Election leaflet "From the Cradle to Old Age.") Mr. Lloyd George commented on it:—"All promises of expenditure—bribery arrayed in scarlet. You cannot have it both ways. You cannot at one moment say that there is expenditure corrupting and demoralizing the people, and when you come to an election say: 'We have done more demoralizing and more corrupting than the Socialist Government.'"

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of internationalist sympathies who have perverted its literature and insidiously introduced pacifist speakers of the League of Nations Union brand who descant on the achievements of the Geneva International Labour Office, etc. While such defeatist speakers are supplied free, others must be paid for by the local organizations. Joint internationalist demonstrations have been arranged at which Free Trade Liberals, and even Socialists, who during the war were conscientious objectors, have been invited to sit on the platform with Conservatives. When, after the disaster of the General Election, the Conservative Conference in July last demanded a thorough investigation, the mandarins of central office succeeded in quashing it, and nothing has been done. Meanwhile, the costly stream of milksop literature, "Hints for Speakers," etc., has persistently claimed credit for Conservative policy as chiefly outshining that of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in the matters of Disarmament, Naval Limitation, Doles and Pensions.

While the party and the country have been rapidly gravitating in the direction of effective tariffs, G.H.Q. remains incapable of giving a clear lead. On the subject of taxes on foreign food it can only say, "The public will decide—not the Conservative Party." As well might a commander in the field say that he would risk an attack after taking a plebiscite of the population behind the lines.

There is good reason to believe that on the subject of safeguarding, if properly presented in the industrial districts, a landslide of Labour votes may be expected which should enable the Conservatives to sweep the country. It is evident, moreover, that a dissolution before the end of the year has again become probable. The next General Election may decide the fate of England for a generation or longer. Either return to sanity and prosperity based upon individual freedom, enterprise and initiative, or gradual decline into a soulless, Socialist slavery from which recovery may be impossible. If the battle has to be fought while the Conservative headquarters organization is paralysed by divisions and unpreparedness, the country will be betrayed by those who alone could save it.

A Criticism of the Naval Conference

By

Vice-Admiral E. A. Taylor, C.M.G., C.V.O.
(Retired.)

AFTER some three months' deliberations, the Naval Conference has resulted in the signing of a Five-Power Agreement on certain technical points, no doubt of some importance, and of a Three-Power Treaty by the Delegates of the British Empire, the United States of America, and Japan.

Owing to the absolute secrecy with which this Conference has been conducted, the public has been left in complete ignorance of the significance and implications of the Treaty.

So far as actual reduction in armaments is concerned, no agreement has been arrived at by all the five Powers. The British Empire, the U.S.A., and Japan under the Five-Power Treaty have agreed not to lay down any capital ships for replacement during the years 1931-1936, and in addition to dispose of four battleships and one battle cruiser, four battleships, and one battleship respectively, instead of waiting till 1936, thus saving very considerably in expenditure on heavy ships. France and Italy may, however, still build the replacement tonnage in heavy ships which they are entitled to in 1927 and 1929, in accordance with the provisions of the Washington Treaty.

So far as security is concerned, this calls for no comment. It is, however, to be regretted that the Powers could not agree to a reduction in the size of heavy ships to between 20,000 and 25,000 tons, which would have ensured further considerable economies without in any way jeopardizing security or efficiency. It is hoped that agreement will be reached on this point at some later date.

Under the Three-Power Treaty, the completed ton-

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nage in the cruiser, destroyer and submarine categories, which is not to be exceeded on December 31, 1936, is definitely laid down. At the same time France and Italy are not limited in any way, and can build what they please, as they are not signatories to this Treaty.

Incidentally it should be noted that Italy has already announced her intention to begin building 29 vessels totalling 42,900 tons in the coming year.

The Three-Power Treaty may be claimed to be an important step in the direction of disarmament, in so far as it does prevent the three Powers from embarking on a competitive building programme. That is true, but it entirely ignores the question whether the tonnage allowance to the British Empire under the Treaty is sufficient to provide her with those forces necessary for her security throughout the world, and the safeguarding of her 80,000 miles of trade routes in peace and war alike. Our world-wide Empire and responsibilities are incomparably greater than either those of the U.S.A. or Japan, and therefore this agreement, reached on the basis of parity, whilst being satisfactory to them, is not necessarily satisfactory to us. By our reduction to 50 cruisers, and the limitations imposed on us by this Treaty, in cruisers, destroyers and submarines, we have a perfect right to contend that we alone are reducing our forces below those necessary, and placing ourselves definitely in an inferior position.

To begin with, under the Treaty the U.S.A. is allowed 18 of the heavier type of cruiser, carrying guns above 6·1 in., to the British Empire's 15. As this is the type which America has always stated she pre-eminently requires, owing to her lack of fuelling stations and bases, it may be taken for granted that she will build up to that number. We shall therefore be definitely placed in a position of inferiority so far as this heavier type of cruiser is concerned.

The number of cruisers this Government have decided on as being necessary for our security, since and because of the signing of the Kellogg Pact, is fifty. This number is twenty less than was considered necessary by the late Government and naval experts in 1927, and their opinion has since been maintained by Lord Bridgeman,

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Lord Jellicoe and Lord Beatty. In view of this reduction, it is all the more imperatively necessary that the vessels comprising this total of fifty should be as up-to-date and efficient as possible. This condition, however, cannot be attained by 1936, owing to the clause in the Treaty which restricts the replacement tonnage of the British Empire to 91,000 tons prior to December 31, 1936, the period of the Treaty.

It may well be asked why this restriction has been imposed on one signatory Power alone. The answer given by Mr. Alexander in the House of Commons debate was, that if complete replacement of our over-age cruisers was carried out in the next four years, we should have to lay down 26 ships, and thereafter only six more in a period of twelve years. This policy, he stated, would be unsound as regards the stabilization of industry, and dockyard requirements, and the Government proposed, therefore, to see that the replacement programme was properly spread over the interval. If that is the reason for this discrimination between the signatory Powers, then it was quite unnecessary to place the restriction in the Treaty at all, as it is entirely our own domestic affair.

The direct result of this restriction is, that if we build up to our 91,000 tons replacements, we can only have 15 new cruisers (average 6,000 tons), but, by the end of 1936, there will be 27 cruisers over-age. So by the end of 1936, our cruiser force of 50 must contain twelve ships which are over-age, and therefore it cannot be considered, and in fact it will not be, efficient for the purpose for which it exists, and in addition, in comparison with new ships built by other nations, it will be completely outclassed.

The United States of America and Japan, on the other hand, can, and no doubt will, replace their existent cruisers, as they become over-age, and build up to the total cruiser tonnage allowed under the Treaty.

It must be obvious that this once more places us in an inferior position and is a most unsatisfactory state of affairs, especially when it is remembered that 25 of the 50 cruisers are definitely allocated to work with the battle fleet. That means that only 25, of which

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some, at any rate, are over-age will be available for safeguarding our 80,000 miles of trade routes the world over.

It was suggested by Lt.-Commander Kenworthy, during the debate in the House of Commons, that we should hold our hands, and see what happens in America and that because of the expenditure it would entail on the American people, they might, in his own words, "refuse to find the appropriations for the tremendous expansion of their fleet."

We are already holding our hands as regards France and Italy, and now we are asked to hold our hands still further. I would ask, is it likely that the American people, who have so consistently clamoured for parity with the British Empire, and who have such an unlimited supply of money, now that their aspirations are within their grasp under this Treaty, will forgo their rights and not build? I do not think so for one moment.

It is not out of place here to recall the fact that the insistence of the American people on possessing a navy "second to none," was the outcome of the war, a determination on their part that never again would they submit to such interference with their trade as they experienced during the war, prior to their entry into that titanic struggle. America, not being a member of the League of Nations, is not bound to subscribe to the sanctions of the League. She will naturally determine her own attitude towards belligerents, and maintain her right to carry on neutral trade as she pleases, in accordance, not with the sanctions of the League, but the "law of the sea."

Now as to destroyers. Our position with regard to this category of ship is equally serious so far as efficiency is concerned. Of a total force of 16 flotilla leaders and 132 destroyers, no less than 14 flotilla leaders and 124 destroyers—practically the whole force—will under the Treaty become over-age by the end of 1932. Taking into account new construction to be completed by December 31, 1932, the number effective on December 31, 1936, without replacement, will be four flotilla leaders and 25 destroyers. That the other Powers

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may be in more or less the same position as regards over-age ships, is beside the point.

This destroyer force has definite duties to perform in case of war, and our concern is not as to whether other nations have over-age destroyers, but whether our own force is capable of carrying out its duties or not. It is obvious that worn-out ships are not efficient and cannot be relied on and, therefore, it is imperative that we should at once embark on a replacement building programme for our destroyer forces. This is the more necessary when one recalls the fact that, in 1936, France will have a destroyer force exceeding ours by 60 per cent., and Italy by 33 per cent. Also, one cannot ignore the existence of the very large French submarine force (100,000 tons), which will be twice as large as our own in 1936.

As to submarines, it will be remembered that the 1929 programme of construction was suspended, pending the results of the Conference, but now that this class of vessel is still to continue in the navies of the world, a replacement programme is urgently required for that category as well.

The article in the Five-Power agreement governing the use of submarines against merchant ships is not satisfactory, in so far as the use of ships' boats is considered sufficient provision for the safety of passengers and crew, provided that the state of the sea and weather and the proximity of land permit it. The interpretation of that clause is very liable to abuse, and it is hoped that at no distant date a more comprehensive restriction may be placed on the submarine commander, so that he may not have the excuse for wantonly sacrificing the lives of merchant seamen and passengers. The omission to include in this clause, faulty as it is, the restriction of the activities of aircraft in promiscuously attacking merchant ships, is much to be regretted. They undoubtedly should come under the same restrictions as submarines, especially as under no circumstances can they themselves make provision for the safety of passengers and crews. The first possible opportunity should be taken by the Government to rectify this omission.

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In general, to maintain efficiency in material, it is necessary to have a continuous building programme. By this means alone can the constructors keep the ships up to date, and in step with the latest scientific discoveries, and embody in the latest type of ship those improvements which experience at sea, under practical conditions, has found to be advantageous and necessary. It is very unsound, both from the practical and the financial point of view, to build by fits and starts. A continuous programme will also stabilize the work to be carried out for H.M. Navy, not only in the Royal dockyards, but in private shipyards.

The personnel of the Navy cannot be efficient unless a considerable amount of sea service is carried out; especially must this be so in the higher ranks. Any economy which is obtained by keeping ships in harbour will, no doubt, save money, but at the expense of the efficiency of the ships, officers and men. It is therefore earnestly to be hoped that the false economy of keeping ships in harbour will not be continued.

Here I wish to mention one point which, though not directly concerned with the Naval Conference, may be an indirect result of it, and that is the question of a reduction in personnel. What steps do the Government propose to take to make adequate provision for whatever discharges of officers and men may result under this Treaty? Those who may be unfortunate enough to be discharged, are entitled to, and should obtain, adequate compensation for the loss of their livelihood and occupation, and one can only trust that the country will insist on justice being meted out to the officers and men concerned.

There have been two entirely distinct groups at work during this Conference, comprising the so-called High Seas group, consisting of the British Empire, the U.S.A. and Japan, and the Continental group, comprising the British Empire, France and Italy.

On the one hand, we had the British Empire, striving to obtain agreement on the basis of parity with America, and having complete faith in the efficacy of the Kellogg Pact, and on the other, the Continental group of France and Italy, with France as its spokesman, striving for an

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agreement on the basis of national security, taking into consideration their actual needs, and in relation thereto, placing little faith in the efficacy of the Kellogg Pact or League of Nations' sanctions clauses. The issue in the Continental group was further complicated by Italy claiming parity with France, and France repudiating the claim.

These two differing lines of approach clashed, and no general agreement was reached between the Five Powers, so far as actual reduction in armaments was concerned. The Prime Minister, rather than allow the Conference to be abortive, and in order to obtain a better understanding with America, has signed a Three-Power Treaty which definitely places us in a position of inferiority, and in the event of war, we should find ourselves without adequate forces at our disposal. Have we already forgotten the lessons of the war, and the straits in which this country found itself owing to lack of cruisers and destroyers?

Our Navy exists primarily for the maintenance of world peace, and to carry out this function it must be adequate for the purpose.

France and Italy are continuing negotiations, and we can only hope that they will arrive at a solution acceptable to all nations, but if they should build to such an extent that our position will be impaired, then under the Treaty we have the absolute right to lay down as many more ships as are necessary. It must, however, be remembered that the United States and Japan are not nearly so concerned with the naval forces of the Mediterranean Powers as we are, and we must therefore be prepared for possible considerable opposition on their part to our implementing this clause, if and when we may consider it necessary to do so.

To sum up the results of this Conference, one can definitely say that we have been given permission by the United States and Japan to reduce our naval forces, whilst they extend theirs. We must judge the Three-Power Treaty, not by the advantages, however great they may be, which accrue from our obtaining an agreement with America, nor on the ground of parity with America, but solely on the basis of whether, under the

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Treaty, we are left with an instrument which is amply sufficient and efficient for the purposes for which it is built. If the Prime Minister is so certain of the continuance of peace, why 50 cruisers, why not 20?

The facts of our position with regard to cruisers, destroyers and submarines plainly show that a considerable building programme in all categories is absolutely essential. Any delay in carrying out this programme would merely strengthen still further the argument used by Mr. Alexander in the House of Commons and would have as a direct result a later postponement of the time when the forces considered necessary would actually be in being.

The more one considers the Treaty, the less does it appear to be a matter for congratulation, either to the Prime Minister or the British Empire. The Prime Minister is gambling on the continuance of peace as a means of security for the British Empire. Is the nation equally optimistic, and does it agree, in view of the existing state of unrest in the world, our absolute dependence on our sea power for our daily existence, and the vital importance of a strong British Empire, that the Prime Minister is justified in taking such a risk, and in reducing our naval strength?

If it does not, then it should not ratify this Treaty.

The Consumers' Council Bill

By J. H. Maggs

(Chairman of United Dairies Ltd.)

THE Consumers' Council Bill, which has received a second reading from the House of Commons, deserves more detailed attention from the general public than a measure so easily crystallized into a popular slogan is likely to receive. Whether it is intended ever to reach the Statute Book is a matter on which opinions appear to differ. Some observers regard it as "window dressing," and, judging by some of the speeches—particularly those of lady members of Parliament—in its defence, it is considered a very attractive piece of work from this particular standpoint.

The ultimate cause of the measure no doubt lies in the fatal ease with which experts in the stimulation of class antagonism can rally consumers to the cry of "War on the profiteer!" Its immediate occasion, as the President of the Board of Trade indicates, is the difference of opinion last year between the Food Council and the milk trade. It is worth while, therefore, to consider the circumstances of that controversy, in attempting to estimate the effect of the sweeping legislative proposals of which it was admittedly the genesis. The two matters are intimately connected, for it is admitted that the Government is contemplating the bestowal upon the Council of power to achieve by force what it failed to achieve by argument. It is proposed also to confer similar powers upon it in relation to a vast number of commodities covering, as Mr. Graham put it, "very much more than half of the total income of the people of this country on the side of expenditure."

This is not an entire surprise. Mr. Graham, in proposing the second reading, observed that, "in no spirit of threat," he had warned the milk distributors that, unless they did what they were told, "the only effect of that would be to encourage the Government to seek powers to obtain information, and possibly even to enforce recommendations." The chairman of the Food Council also made a virtual admission in a letter in the *Times* on April 8, that the Council has been in the habit of enforcing its demands by the threat of using force. His way of putting it is that "the conclusions reached

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have been accepted or ignored, as the likelihood of further powers being given has advanced or receded." No evidence is given in his letter to support this generalization, nor are we told how Sir Alan Powell has detected an ebb and flow of "likelihood of further powers" which has hardly, I think, been perceptible to traders or the public. However that may be, the milk distributors refused to be intimidated, and they are now held up to public odium and saddled with the responsibility for a thoroughly bad measure.

The first fact to be made clear is that, although the Food Council has at present no compulsory powers for obtaining information, the London milk trade supplied all the particulars for which it was asked. United Dairies accounts were supplied in January, 1928; the Food Council reported in March 1929! Any suggestion of concealment or evasiveness on the part of the trade is disposed of by the words of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, in winding up the discussion on the second reading. He dealt specifically with the question of milk prices and said: "Suppose they had had the compulsory powers of investigation . . . *the result would have been exactly the same.*" All that is relevant to this particular issue, therefore, is the claim that the Food Council, or some similar body, is a suitable authority to fix prices.

How did the Food Council act in its negotiations with the milk trade? On our side, as the Parliamentary Secretary admits, there was the most complete candour. We submitted our returns of costs and income. The Food Council proceeded to alter the figures, adding to the profits and deducting from the costs, without any indication of the principles on which it did so. The chairman of the Council has since indicated that "re-adjustments" were made by an alteration of our allocation of costs as between milk and other commodities in which the companies deal. On what basis this allocation was altered we do not know. It certainly is not a simple matter to calculate, and, while our figures were clear and distinct, the calculations and "estimates" of the Food Council are wrapped in mystery.

They appear to have assumed that the profits in all the selected accounts were earned on a cost figure represented by the standard price settled by the joint com-

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mittee of distributors and producers without, apparently, attempting to verify this. It is well known in the trade that in 1926 (the year to which most of the accounts related) concessions were, in many cases, obtained from the wholesalers or producers from those standard prices. Neither the actual cost nor the actual selling prices appear to have been ascertained. Further, no attempt appears to have been made to ascertain the cost of processing and distributing a quart or any other unit of milk.

The Food Council then proceeded to estimate the profits for 1928-29, without making any allowance for increased costs due to the improved services given by large sections of the trade. They *estimated* that on the basis of these illusory "profits," inflated as they had been by the arbitrary alterations made by the Food Council in the audited accounts submitted, the trade would earn 2.6 per cent. in 1928-29, if they charged the public the prices arranged with the farmers when the contracts were made in September, 1928. This rate of profit (although it amounted to only about 1s. 5d. per 100 quarts) the Food Council declared, was too great, and they demanded a reduction of 1d. a quart in the month of August, which, on their own calculations, would have reduced the profit on the year's trading to 1.4 per cent. ! In a word, they suggested that for the month of August the milk distributors should sacrifice the profits of six months' trading !

When the trade presented this aspect of the case to the Food Council and requested to know what the Council had laid down as a standard profit for the retailer, they were afforded no reply, and it was evident that the Council had no standard and no basis beyond the lowest figure they could intimidate the traders into accepting.

This Bill, then, is the big stick about which Mr. Graham spoke to the milk trade when he told them that, unless they charged 6d. instead of 7d. a quart in August last year, the Government would be encouraged to seek "powers to enforce recommendations." The case against the milk trade is based upon that penny about which, to put it in its most moderate form, there is so much doubt that Co-operative Societies, including the oldest and one of the most important in the

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London milk trade, did not hesitate to charge it. The extent to which the whole matter is enveloped by prejudice may be judged from the fact that the President of the Board of Trade appears to have convinced himself and most of his party that, so far as London is concerned, the milk trade and United Dairies are synonymous terms. "The position there," he said, referring in his speech on the second reading of the Bill to milk prices in London, "is that there is, for all practical purposes, a great milk combine." So little does Mr. Graham know of the milk situation in London that he imagines that the attitude of the trade was dictated by United Dairies, whereas, in fact, no effective control of prices exists or can exist. A large proportion of the trade, to say nothing of the Co-operative Societies, are outside the control of United Dairies and competing fiercely with them for the consumers' custom.

It is significant that London was selected as the ground of attack, obviously because it was felt that the magic words "United Dairies" or "milk combine" would be worth far more for debating purposes than solid argument. Nothing was said by the Government spokesmen of provincial milk prices, nothing of the fact that the "milk combine" buy less than 10 per cent. of the milk produced in the country and do not own a single provincial retail business. Did the Food Council tell the President of the Board of Trade that important Co-operative Societies in London were whole-heartedly in line with the rest of the milk trade in insisting on that extra 1d. per quart in August? Did they tell him that large provincial Co-operative Societies, with access to cheaper supplies, consistently charged equal or higher prices than London? Did they tell him, too, that since United Dairies came into existence, London milk prices have been lower in relation to provincial prices than before the combine was established? And did they tell him—did they even know themselves—that in country towns, where supplies are drawn from farms a mile or two away, and the milk retailers have nothing to do but pour the milk, as it is, into bottles, and send it out direct to customers, the price of milk is usually exactly the same as in London? The producer-retailer who transfers his milk straight from the pail into the consumer's jug without any expenditure on bottles or delivery, he, too,

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charges London prices. What do Mr. Graham or his advisers think of facts like these? Is it their intention, under their Bill, to legalize such overcharges?

These facts, and many others equally relevant that could be adduced, were clearly not brought to the knowledge of the President of the Board of Trade. It would be inconvenient for him to know them, for facts that do not conform with preconceived theories make bad hearing for doctrinaire politicians. When Mr. Graham interviewed the Trade on this matter last summer, he, wisely, as I think, made no attempt to justify the Food Council's report, and no one who was present at that meeting will recognize his statement to the House of Commons as a fair representation of what took place. What he said, in effect, was that, as a layman, he could not be expected to follow the very complicated arithmetical calculations which were put before him, but he had no hesitation in agreeing with the Food Council's view.

It is not my purpose here to go step by step through the arguments advanced by the author of the Bill, but it is pertinent to call attention, as I have done, to the flimsiness of the case on which the arguments for the Bill rest, in order to show how many and diverse are the difficulties involved in entrusting a small non-expert body with dictatorial powers extending over the whole range, not merely of our staple foodstuffs, but of "any other article of common use," to quote the lavish language employed in this ill-considered Bill. It is clear from the manner in which the Bill was presented to the House of Commons that its framers will not be content to stop at mere dictation. They know that the present abortive measure will prove unworkable, and that its natural sequel will be to take the further step that leads to full control. Its natural sequel, according to the textbooks, that is, for there is much more likely to be an intermediate stage in which the distribution of our food supplies is thrown into such complete chaos, owing to State interference, that no one can foretell what the effect will be.

The President of the Board of Trade was quite candid as to his ultimate aim, the extinction of the private trader. "There can be," he said, "no effectual control of prices in this or in any other land, unless we control

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supplies." He went on to say that a majority for public ownership could not be obtained in the present House of Commons, but "as many of the commodities are subject to combines and trusts, they will inevitably become the materials for public utilities and public corporations." In this matter, Mr. Graham said, he thought he represented the views of his colleagues. A supporter of the Bill, Mr. Wise, declared later that "the mere fixation of prices by itself is very often the cause of as many difficulties as it removes," and added that "all experience in the war and afterwards confirms the view that it is dangerous, if not impossible, to fix maximum prices unless you are prepared to control supplies." Mr. Wise, is, of course, a 'whole-hogger' on broad principles, and it is perhaps characteristic of his breadth that he is more plausible in his sweeping generalizations than when he descends to particulars. If Mr. Graham ignored facts that did not suit his argument, Mr. Wise, with greater zeal for his cause, distorted or invented them. He made great play in his speech with the margin of 100 per cent. or so between the producers' price and the price to the consumer. That margin, he was convinced, was absolutely unjustified; it was not necessary in New York, it was not necessary in London. Would it surprise Mr. Wise to learn that London distributors do, actually, work on a narrower margin than New York distributors? I have before me, as I write, authentic statistics concerning the twenty-two largest American dairy companies. I might cite many instructive figures concerning the individual companies, but it is perhaps sufficient to quote from the grand totals. They reveal the instructive fact that the net profits on sales amounting (for the twenty-two companies) to nearly nine hundred million dollars (say £178,000,000) reach 5·63 per cent., a figure which would no doubt astonish the Food Council and the President of the Board of Trade, who affect to regard 2·6 per cent. as profiteering!

Let me turn to another aspect of the milk question—public health. There is no commodity which, in recent years, has shown a more remarkable rise in its standard than London milk. The securing of a plentiful supply of safe milk has been largely the work of a "combine," and it is noticeable in the report of the Parliamentary debate that thoughtful men are no longer disposed to

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use "ring" and "combine" as terms of abuse. Sir Herbert Samuel was particularly warm in his insistence on the public value of combines. If the public now has its most valuable food under conditions of the maximum safety that modern science can secure, it is done at a cost and in face of difficulties which the Food Council and many members of Parliament show a complete failure to appreciate.

Probably few people realize the care, trouble, and great expenditure which the milk distributing companies have voluntarily undertaken in order to secure a pure, wholesome, and safe supply. In London, a large proportion of the supply is not only made absolutely safe by pasteurization—a costly process; it is analysed and tested more thoroughly than is required by the exacting demands of our public health authorities. This point was well brought out by no less an authority than Sir William Simpson, an eminent physician, who observes in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* on May 17, that he has "no financial interest whatever in any milk company, but a great interest in the good health of the community." The Food Council, which blames the milk distributors for not reducing their charges to an uneconomic level, would do well to ponder his words. "I feel strongly," he says, "that if the price of milk is interfered with, it will ultimately result in inducing many dealers, who have endeavoured hitherto to copy the methods of the big companies, to slacken their efforts in maintaining the present quality and purity of the milk. The consequent sickness from every aspect would be more expensive to the public." The result of trying to force uneconomic conditions on the milk trade—and the Food Council's 1·4 per cent. is grossly uneconomic—might well be a milk famine or a serious decline in standard.

The constitutional aspects of the Consumers' Council Bill, with the very large powers it enables the President of the Board of Trade to exercise without consulting Parliament, do not come within the scope of this article, which is concerned with the matter as it affects tradesmen and consumers. The Government actually did fix the price of milk during and after the war, with results from which legislators should have learned a lesson, if they had taken the pains to consider the effects of

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food control with impartial minds. No one with any practical experience of trading can fail to recognize that the present Bill sets out to achieve ends which must necessarily go far beyond the powers of the small and inexpert body which it proposes to set up. The Ministry of Food during the war dealt with a relatively small number of foodstuffs, and from small beginnings somewhat similar to those contemplated in this Bill rose to such dimensions that it employed a staff throughout the country of several thousands. There was a Consumers' Council at the Ministry of Food, an advisory body whose views were respectfully listened to, but were not translated into practice until they had been considered from every possible aspect by an army of experts of all kinds—commercial, technical, legal, financial, administrative, and so forth—who were at the Ministry's disposal. The position under Mr. Graham's Bill will be that neither he, himself, nor anyone else occupying his office, can possibly examine all the detail on which the Food Council's Report is based. However perfunctory their inquiry may be, however misguided their judgment owing to the lack of the necessary knowledge and experience, he will be faced with the alternative of enforcing their decisions or repudiating them, in either event without the necessary skilled guidance to enable him to form a sound opinion.

It would seem absolutely essential that if ever this misconceived Bill should reach the Statute Book in any form, some qualified appeal court, independent of the Council and independent of the Government of the day, should be constituted under it to protect the trader, and, therefore, ultimately the public, against the dictatorial decisions of the Council. The very name of the proposed body, the Consumers' Council, suggests class legislation of a wholly impracticable kind. To set out on an attempt to protect the consumer by attacking the distributor may be a reasonable enterprise for a voluntary organization, but for Parliament to establish an organization so lopsided in its constitution and its objective is the negation of fair government.

India—Security and the Railways

By Maj.-Gen. Sir Henry Freeland

Late Member of the Indian Railway Board ; and General Manager Bombay, Bamba & Central India Railway, Director B.B.C.I. Railway.

THE writer was recently asked, during a voyage from India, whether he considered that there was danger of another Indian Mutiny. It is presumed the interrogator, when he asked the question, gave due consideration to the fundamental causes of that disaster and recognized the difference between the conditions then and now, so far as the Indian Army is concerned.

When he spoke of another mutiny, he was probably thinking of results, not causes, for the loyalty and steadfastness of the Indian Army are unquestionable. He may therefore be interpreted as asking whether under present conditions there is danger to life and property such as existed in Mutiny days. This is an attempt to throw some light on the subject.

Seventy odd years have elapsed since the relief of Lucknow and in that time great changes in every direction have taken place. There is no need to specify these changes in detail in such an article as this, but it is necessary for the elucidation of the subject to lay stress on two factors: the great improvements that have been effected in the armament and equipment of the military forces and in the means of communication between all parts of India.

Government, thus, has at its command two principal weapons for the maintenance of law and order, in the last resort, and it is with these that the writer proposes to deal.

It has not been forgotten that the Indian Police Force is an efficient body of men, loyal and ably led; nor have the possibilities of the Auxiliary Force for temporary defence been overlooked. But in case of serious disturbance both will be swept away, unless quickly reinforced by regular troops. Rapidity and security of movement,

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therefore, become matters of supreme importance and there is no means so effective as transport by rail.

Although in certain localities, mostly near the North West frontier—where, by the way, internal trouble is least likely to occur—an unorganised mob can be dispersed by aeroplane action, for the most part the only adequate solution lies in railing armoured cars and infantry to the affected area.

In some provinces road communications are sufficiently good to allow of armoured cars and lorries loaded with troops to be moved on their own wheels to the rescue of isolated communities. But in the great majority of cases distances will be so great, climatic conditions so severe and roads, fit for fast motor traffic, so poor that the railways will be the quickest, if not the only, means of moving troops.

Over the whole face of India may be found small bodies of European and Anglo-Indian men, women and children living remote from any military centre, and although they may possess a few rifles and can defend themselves for a short period, they will, if attacked in force, inevitably succumb to weight of numbers unless speedily relieved.

Is there, then, any imminent danger to these people?

Let us first consider a few facts; everyone in India knows them and a few appreciate their true significance; but does the general public in Great Britain ever realise that their fellow-countrymen in that mysterious Eastern land believe they are living on the brink of a volcano?

It is common knowledge to all in India that the leaders of the extremist party preach with impunity the gospel of independence of Great Britain; nothing will satisfy them but that every British man, woman and child shall be turned, neck and crop, out of the country. They openly advocate the repudiation of all debt, particularly that owing to Great Britain, and they demand that violent measures shall be resorted to, should persuasion fail.

To the plain man this is unmitigated sedition.

But the man in the street in England gathers his knowledge from the public Press where the reader rarely sees a full exposition of the Indian problem, even if he

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has time to devote to the study of questions that are not easily understood and seem only remotely to affect him.

Nevertheless, if we would have even a glimmering of the truth, we must be made aware of and keep in mind the most recent happenings.

Most of us have heard of Gandhi, although we do not all know the terms of the ultimatum recently presented by him to the Viceroy. Having failed to elicit any satisfactory reply, Gandhi has set out with a small body of adherents on a march through one of the Western Provinces with the declared object of preaching to the villages *en route* his policy of non-violent civil disobedience. This means, in a word, that he is endeavouring to stir up his ignorant and superstitious countrymen, who look upon him as a saint, to break the law. That he will have some success there is little doubt,* but when the unfortunate Indian cultivator or fisherman has got into his head that Gandhi is the King of India and that the British Raj is dead, it is hardly likely that the royal saint will be able to stem the tide of violence and bloodshed. We have only to cast our minds back to the massacre of Chauri-Chaura or to the Malabar rebellion not so many years ago, and we shall have a fair idea of the probable results of Gandhi's efforts.

Again, within the lifetime of the present Legislature the Government of India has placed on the Statute Book the Trades Dispute Act, and as a result a large number of disgruntled members of the Indian legal profession have found congenial employment on the Executive Committees of Trade Unions all over the country. Most of these Committees are self-elected and their following has been collected by means of extravagant promises to prospective members, the majority of whom are not sufficiently educated to think for themselves. Trade Unions are, however, in full accord with the principles of democracy and, as there are many who believe that India is ready for government by the people, there is no doubt that Trade Unionism has come to stay.

* Since this was written, Gandhi has been arrested and the protests against his imprisonment have taken the form of riots at Delhi, Calcutta and elsewhere.

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It is only necessary to point out one aspect of the matter, which has special bearing on the question of railway communications, but is not evident to anyone not concerned in railway operation and management, and it is this. The railway unions, by dint of pressure on the Legislature, have succeeded in obtaining from the Government a set of regulations for the appointment, promotion and discharge of employees which is having the effect of making it extremely difficult to remove undesirable, undisciplined and even dangerously negligent men from the service. The procedure is so laborious and the reversal of orders so probable that officers in charge are inclined to overlook serious faults and failures rather than add to their already excessive burdens.

There is no one so quick to take advantage of leniency and interpret it as fear as the Indian, and there is reason to suspect that a new element of danger has thus been introduced into railway operation in India.

One of the most remarkable achievements of British rule in India has been the administration and working of the railways with only a few responsible white men in control of a very numerous body of Indians. That the railway services have reached their present high standard in speed and safety is principally due to the insistence on discipline among the staff, particularly in the lower grades. There is, unfortunately, a definite prospect of deterioration under the new conditions dictated by the Trades Disputes Act.

One last illustration of the state of affairs in India may be given as bearing specially on the question of communications. If a man were to rise sufficiently early in the morning and move through the villages and towns in any Province, he would be astonished to find considerable assemblies of young men going through military evolutions—in short, drilling to the word of command. Most of them would be carrying long poles or lathis in their hands, and an enquirer would be told that they were members of the Society known as the "League of Youth." They are openly hostile to the Government and are sworn to support with violence anyone who preaches revolution and death to the British. In fact, they are Bolsheviks,

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undeterred and unashamed; and there are tens of thousands of these irresponsible hotheads assimilating every day a military ardour, even a modicum of discipline, with a definite object in view, the overthrow of the British Power.

Having then considered these few examples of the methods of governing India at the present moment, it is time to return to the main issue, the maintenance intact of the communications, railways especially.

Anyone who has ever seen a railway, even if he has only seen it from the point of view of a passenger, must realize how easily it can be obstructed. The destruction of a bridge or a tunnel will close a line definitely.

The main trunk lines, over which must travel bodies of troops sent out to restore law and order or prevent further disturbance, pass through long stretches of open country, with a village here and there and many an unprotected bridge along the route. A charge of explosive, lodged in the right place in one of the piers, will bring down the structure and block the line, probably for weeks, as repairs to a bridge are a difficult and tedious business and a diversion round the obstruction is rarely possible.

There is little satisfaction to be gained from the assurances we receive that the police know all the bad characters and keep a watch on them. All their vigilance could not avail to prevent the outrage on the Viceroy's train recently. Nor are we impressed by the view that there is no organising head to control the whole subversive movement. True, a combined and general attempt to overthrow the Government seems at present remote. But it cannot be too strongly insisted that behind all the political controversy there is unquestionably working a powerful well-financed gang of Bolsheviks and that it is organizing all the Railway Unions for a general strike throughout the country. Such a catastrophe would completely paralyse Government for a protracted period and advantage would certainly be taken of the confusion by all the other "Red" organizations, working below the surface now.

It is not Pundit Motilal Nehru or Mr. Gandhi and their adherents, nor is it the League of Youth that constitutes

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the principal danger; it is the destructive element of Bolshevism behind them all that is to be feared.

Briefly, then, the Government of India must rely for the maintenance of its authority on the freedom to move over all its railways. There is, on the other hand, a well-defined and openly lawless movement in being, fanatical and ill-organized for the moment, but recruited from an intelligent and ever-growing community of young malcontents and gaining its impetus from Bolshevik sources.

This movement will, in all probability, be directed against the most vulnerable link in the chain of defence works erected against lawlessness and disorder, the trunk routes of the railways. However these routes are patrolled and inspected, many opportunities will occur, especially under cover of darkness, to destroy through communication over them. Little or no information will be available of the site and nature of the damage, as the destroyers' first precaution will be to interrupt the telegraph and telephone lines.

It is not difficult to imagine the complete strangling of the forces of law and order under such circumstances, but it is less easy to find an adequate remedy.

Something may be done by the establishment of wireless communications throughout the country. In fact, apart from the the advantage of a certain means of interchange of information and instructions between outlying places and headquarters, the value of a system of wireless broadcasting in the interests of government is proved. There are striking examples of this in Western countries and the Government of India would do well to develop the small beginnings of wireless in the provinces and districts where trouble is known to be most likely.

But to find an unfailing means of protecting the railway lines joining the various military cantonments with prospective storm centres is a much more difficult problem. If the minute inspection and careful patrolling of the railway over which the Head of the Government was about to travel, and all the secrecy in regard to his dates and routes could not prevent determined men from mining the track and blowing up his train in January last, it may be taken as certain that it will be a far more

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simple business for such men to destroy a railway at points of their own selection.

What is the remedy? To find it we are reluctantly compelled to make an effort to understand the political situation, which hangs like a smoke-screen between us and the truth.

There are many people, who know their India, who feel exceedingly pessimistic about the future, not only British, but Indians, too. So much so that it is common knowledge that very large investments are being realised in that country and reinvested elsewhere. If it were only British investors that were taking this step, we might attribute their actions to ordinary financial requirements, but when by far the largest sums of money are being remitted to foreign countries by Indians themselves, there is real cause for alarm.

We are told that the Government of India thoroughly realizes all that is going on and has decided to give offenders plenty of rope to hang themselves. Moreover, Government is said to rely on ridicule to kill the Gandhi and other movements.

Possibly Government may be justified in their opinion that this is the best way to deal with the comparatively insignificant seditious movements which are open to all who have eyes to see. But if by any chance they are mistaken and the real trouble lies obscured, it is the soldier who will be summoned to the aid of the Civil Power, and the soldier does not like too much "rope"; he thinks it may become entangled in his own legs. We can quite appreciate his point of view, for not only does he see no honour and glory to be gained, but he has a very natural repugnance to shooting down his own folk, knowing them to be innocent, though misled. It is not a wise policy to play with fire and, loyal as the Indian Army now is, Government would be well-advised not to try the men too far.

The British public judge, presumably, by what they read in the Press; they have no other means of forming an opinion. So, when we read that an eminent politician after a recent visit to the East stated that India is in a far better condition than she was ten years ago, we who know the facts are filled with despondency. For some

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reason or other people in Great Britain have faith in the utterings of Members of the House of Commons but suspect ulterior motive when advised by professional men. Nevertheless, the latter are more often right than wrong, as history records. It is not only that the present writer disagrees emphatically with the aforesaid politician, but that every member of the British community outside the Government of India offices, innumerable loyal but inarticulate Indians, all rulers of the great Indian States and the vast majority of Indian traders and industrialists deplore the attitude of weak complacency adopted by the Central Government in India.

When the writer questioned his friends, who occupy positions in one department or other of that Government, he was told that the policy was dictated by Whitehall, but it is hard to believe that London will frame and pursue a policy, unless supported by Simla or Delhi. It can only be assumed, then, that for some reason, possibly based on wrong ideals or political expediency, the Government of India is blind to the dangers that envelop it. Or is it that there are so many political trees that the wood is invisible?

If an observer who has known his India for thirty odd years may presume to offer criticism, he would hazard the opinion that those on whom the Viceroy relies for expert advice are so deeply involved in the game of political adventure with the more mentally agile Indian members of the Legislature that the realities of the situation have faded into obscurity. So we, who stand afar off, we who have given of our best for many long years, ungrudgingly and without profit, we cannot but feel that Government has lost the art of governing.

If to govern means to provide for the security of the governed and for the internal peace of the country, then India is no longer being governed. Business is depressed, money is being hurried out of the country, anxiety is everywhere deplorably evident; these are indisputable facts, and if the situation is not remedied without delay, the cost to us in blood and treasure will be great and our loss of prestige in the eyes of the world will be even greater.

An endeavour has been made to show that the principal

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danger lies in the vulnerability of Indian communications at the hands of the many Bolsheviki organisations, operating under cover of the contending political parties. To counter this movement involves strong and sustained action on the part of Government, and all well-wishers of India pray that such action will not be delayed. Bolshevism, like other poisonous diseases, flourishes best in the dark and among the ignorant and superstitious; unfortunately, the great mass of the population comes into this category. Education and enlightenment must necessarily bear fruit in the end, but they must be carefully planned to suit conditions. Perhaps one of the most flagrant errors we British have committed in India has been the establishment and encouragement of Universities which turn out young men, who have received a partial training in the legal and literary professions, in such numbers that only a small percentage have a chance of finding employment to suit their bent. The remainder, jobless and discontented, are consequently easy prey for the anarchist. It is from among these intelligent and lawless men that the perpetrators of any contemplated outrage will be selected. They are quite capable of planning the complete isolation of any place by means of explosives and wirecutters.

Surely it is time that Government should rectify this mistake, and cut off the supply of such inflammable material.

To the plain man there is only one defence against the insidious attack of Bolshevism in India; there is only one way to rule an Eastern country; there is only one method of restoring confidence among the disheartened officials, traders and Ruling Princes alike; there is only one hope in the minds of all loyal subjects of the Crown, British and Indian. It is that the Central Government will display their real strength and will waste no more time in an endeavour to trim the political boat. All that is needed is that the country shall be ruled strongly and justly, as we British have always known how to do.

Is it too much to ask the British Lion to insist on this here and now, or must his tail be twisted off before he will assert himself?

John Masefield

By Horace Shipp

"THE laureate is dead; long live the laureate." In the kingdom of letters welcome to the newcomer to this high honour as the servant of the King and of English literature is an act of homage at once to the old and the new. There was a kind of poetic beauty in the passing of Dr. Bridges when he had brought his life's work to a marvellous fulfilment with the "Testament of Beauty" and had seen that work accepted on all sides as the fine achievement it was. In face of it the voices of his detractors in the catchpenny press were silenced. It was realized that, although the great mass of work written before he accepted the laureateship was a sufficient justification—although, indeed, the office had been accepted on the understanding that this should be so—Robert Bridges had performed a self-imposed task which raised the laureateship to the height of its dignity.

With his passing there was a suggestion that the office should be allowed to lapse. It would, I think, have been a thousand pities to lose it.

Poetry is for England her great art form. No language has a greater tradition of poetry, and to have abandoned the picturesque office would have been a concession to the materialism and Philistinism which threaten contemporary life. Nor would there have been any justification. Half a dozen names were put forward and any one of them would have graced the position. Mr. Kipling, Mr. Yeats or Sir William Watson, Mr. Binyon or Mr. de la Mare; any of these might have been appointed for his past achievement quite apart from any promise of future work. None, however, would so perfectly have fitted the place as the one who was chosen; and the appointment of John Masefield has been received with a chorus of praise for its wisdom and justness.

John Masefield has succeeded in being both the poet of the literary sets and of the man in the street. There is in his work no attempt to write down, no cheap jingle to catch the unsophisticated ear, yet we learn that the volume of his collected poems published a few years ago has sold 80,000 copies. Again, I find in an old issue of

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the *Poetry Review* a thoughtful article upon Masefield which begins :

The unreasoned but not unreasonable clamour which heralded the issue of *The Everlasting Mercy* and *The Widow in the Bye Street* caused people to devour poetry.

The story of the publication of those poems has become part of the literary history of our century, and THE ENGLISH REVIEW may be not unjustly proud of the part it played and the editorial courage of the late Austin Harrison in giving so many pages of one issue to the publication of a poem in a new vein by a man who was then little known. The effect must have surprised alike the poet and his editor, for edition after edition of that number of the REVIEW was called for and John Masefield's poem gave a new vogue to poetry. Before "The Everlasting Mercy" Masefield had written two or three slim volumes largely of the sea songs which now we prize, and he had written both *Nan* and *The Tragedy of Pompey the Great* for the theatre. Both plays and the lovely early lyrics had been accepted well by the discerning few, but it was with the publication of "The Everlasting Mercy" that Masefield entered his kingdom. Nor must it be belittled as a *succès de scandale* based upon the use of realistic bad language. Masefield himself has said, "Tragedy at its best is a vision of the heart of life It is only by such vision that a multitude can be brought to the passionate knowledge of things exalting and external." It was that faith which created the great series of studies of realistic humanity of which this poem was the first. As his later work has proved, Masefield's preoccupation is with beauty, and it was his great achievement in these pieces that he could always cut straight through the realistic surface to reveal the beauty, terror and pity which gave everlasting significance to life.

With his next poem, "The Widow in the Bye Street," there is, to my mind, a falling back. Little wonder if the poet tried to repeat the success by a brilliant parody. The great wonder is that with the poems which followed, "Dauber" and "The Daffodil Fields" he was at his best. "Dauber" has a description of a storm at sea which is unequalled in our literature. From that

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time forward each new book by Masefield has been an event in literature. In poetry he has touched almost every note: with lyric, narrative or dramatic poetry he is equally at his ease; singing of the sea or of the English countryside, of the lives of the poor or of fox-hunters, of sailors or farmers; or in metaphysical vein dealing with abstract beauty as he does in the exquisite sonnets of the "Lollington Downs" volume; however and of whatever he writes, John Masefield is a fine poet, and an essentially English one.

The first poem in our language, the lovely "Song of the Far Traveller," written in the seventh century, breathes exactly the note which Masefield has sounded in our own day.

So have I wandered in many strange lands, throughout the whole world. There, cut off from kindred, I have found good and evil; far abroad from kinsmen have I gone. Therefore I can sing and tell a story.

That is probably the secret of Masefield's power. Since as a youth he ran away to sea, throughout the days when he was on the road in America, through his experiences as a "beachcomber" in the States, and the early disappointments of his writing days in Bloomsbury, Masefield has been in contact with life at first hand. His literature is the harvest of that real experience.

As a craftsman, he is a traditionalist rather than an experimentalist. His work gives one the feeling that his concern is rather with presentation in the simplest possible fashion than with his own technique, that he is keen upon expressing rather than upon expression.

As a poetic mind we may say of him as he himself has said of one of his characters;

"He loved the downland like a sea"

And every other thing he loved
In which a clean, free spirit moved."

That, with his magnificent past and the promise of his future, makes the choice of John Masefield as the poet-laureate of England a happy augury for the art which is our greatest national achievement; and from these columns, which claim the distinction of having first published practically every one of his masterpieces, we add our word of homage.

"The Everlasting Mercy"

(From *The English Review*, October 1911)

LOOKING back to 1911, we were surprised to find that "The Everlasting Mercy" occupied over 40 pages, a demand on space which would stagger most Reviews. Men of letters who write at a length inconvenient for either a book or a magazine are commonly dismissed by editors and publishers as unreasonable, and the remaining alternative, the pamphlet, is in itself a handicap, as it seems cheap and is the favourite resort of the crank. Once published, "The Everlasting Mercy" made its way and the author's name, but one cannot refuse its first Editor the tribute due to courage.

"Education," Sir Walter Raleigh was writing in this very month of October 1911, "has taken the fine bloom off the writing of books." Here was a poem which demanded no learning from the reader, a tale of fighting and drinking rich in the strength of the vernacular, with a startling directness of style. Here was that real England which knows nothing of literary coteries and temporary fashions of style. "The Everlasting Mercy" was "simple, sensuous, passionate," with couplets as easy as Scott's and language as naive as Crabbe's. Above all, it was English. We take pleasure in quoting extracts which show its English quality, the freshness of its return to common life and feeling, the joy of work on the land, the friendly sights and sounds of native landscape.

Saul Kane, the hero and narrator of the poem, for all his drunken violence has a tender feeling for

A little child with laughing look
A lovely white unwritten book.

and for

Those poor lonely ones who find
Dogs more kind than human kind.
"For dogs," I said, "are nobles born
To most of you, you cockled corn.
I've known dogs to leave their dinner,
Nosing a kind heart in a sinner.
Poor old Crafty wagged his tail
The day I first came home from jail.
When all my folk, so primly clad,
Glowered black and thought me mad,

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And muttered how they'd been respected,
While I was what they'd all expected."
(I've thought of that old dog for years,
And of how near I come to tears.)

He glories in his strength :—

The men who don't know to the root
The joy of being swift of foot,
Have never known divine and fresh
The glory of the gift of flesh,
Nor felt the feet exult, nor gone
Alone a dim road, on and on,
Knowing again the bursting glows,
The mating hare in April knows,
Who tingles to the pads with mirth
At being the swiftest thing on earth.

And when the revelation came, it made all things new
and beautiful :—

O glory of the lighted mind,
How dead I'd been, how dumb, how blind !
The station brook, to my new eyes,
Was babbling out of Paradise,
The waters rushing from the rain
Were singing Christ has risen again.
I thought all earthly creatures knelt
From rapture of the joy I felt.
The narrow station-wall's brick ledge,
The wild hop withering in the hedge,
The lights in huntsman's upper storey
Were parts of an eternal glory,
Were God's eternal garden flowers.
I stood in bliss at this for hours.

So up the road I wander slow
Past where the snowdrops used to grow
With celandines in early springs,
When rainbows were triumphant things
And dew so bright and flowers so glad,
Eternal joy to lass and lad.
And past the lovely brook I paced,
The brook whose source I never traced.
The brook, the one of two which rise

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In my green dream in Paradise,
In wells where heavenly buckets clink
To give God's wandering thirsty drink
By those clean cots of carven stone
Where the clear water sings alone.
Then down, past that white-blossomed pond,
And past the chestnut trees beyond,
And past the bridge the fishers knew,
Where yellow flag flowers once grew,
Where we'd go gathering cops of clover,
In sunny June times long since over.

The very ploughman was a symbol of the divine :—

Slow up the hill the plough team plod,
Old Callow at the task of God,
Helped by man's wit, helped by the brute,
Turning a stubborn clay to fruit,
His eyes for ever on some sign
To help him plough a perfect line.
At top of rise the plough team stopped,
The fore-horse bent his head and cropped,
Then the chains chack, the brasses jingle,
The lean reins gather through the cringle,
The figures move against the sky,
The clay wave breaks as they go by.
I kneeled there in the muddy fallow,
I knew that Christ was there with Callow,
That Christ was standing there with me.
That Christ had taught me what to be,
That I should plough, and as I ploughed
My Saviour Christ would sing aloud,
And as I drove the clods apart
Christ would be ploughing in my heart,
Through rest-harrow and bitter roots,
Through all my bad life's rotten fruits.

There follows a lovely description of country joys :—

By this the sun was all one glitter,
The little birds were all in twitter;
Out of a tuft a little lark
Went higher up than I could mark,
His little throat was all one thirst
To sing until his heart should burst,

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To sing aloft in golden light
His song from blue air out of sight.
The mist drove by, and now the cows
Came plodding up to milking house.
Followed by Frank, the Callows' cowman,
Who whistled "Adam was a ploughman."
There come such cawing from the rooks,
Such running chuck from little brooks,
One thought it March, just budding green,
With hedgerows full of celandine.
The 'fisher flickered by to fish
Like a blue gem in a green wish;
An otter 'out of stream and played,
Two hares come loping up and stayed;
Wide-eyed and tender-eared but bold.
Sheep bleated up by Penny's fold.
I heard a partridge covey call,
The morning sun was bright on all.

The poem ends with summer on the wane, but the tall lilies of many a cottage garden take up the unending tale of beauty :—

How swift the summer goes !
Forget-me-not, pink, rose.
The young grass when I started
And now the hay is carted,
And now my song is ended,
And all the summer spendend ;
The blackbird's second brood
Routs beech leaves in the wood,
The pink and rose have speeded,
Forget-me-not has seeded.
Only the winds that blew,
The rain that makes things new,
The earth that hides things old,
And blessings manifold.

O lovely lily clean,
O lily springing green,
O lily bursting white,
Dear lily of delight :
Spring in my heart agen
That I may flower to men.

The Vagrant Swallow

By Commander Bernard Acworth, D.S.O.

WITH the return of Spring nature once again performs one of her boundless store of conjuring tricks by bringing home to the familiar places the summer birds, from their odyssey in foreign lands, those little wanderers that make so generous an addition to the coming warm and lazy summer days. The term "conjuring tricks" is used advisedly, because natural wonders, like the conjurer's, are wonderful only so long as the secret of their performance is veiled from us. When we know the laws which govern the phenomenon, or the tricks by which our reason and observation are deluded, our admiration for the wonder itself is transferred to the Worker of the marvel. Thus in the natural world we are like a great gathering of children at a party, watching the conjuring feats with inquisitive eyes and questioning brains; solving some riddles, guessing at more, and totally ignorant of many that seem to be performed by pure magic.

Of all the natural tricks of nature, few transcend in perennial interest the coming and going of the birds. The trick has been watched and thousands of books written round the subject. Why did they leave us last autumn? Where have they been? Why have they returned? How did they find their way? These questions have been asked since man first used his eyes, but never, so far as can be discovered, satisfactorily answered. It seems now to be almost universally assumed that birds have evolved reflective capacity and the power of objective, and therefore calculating, action. In the absence of any all-embracing physical law of nature to which aerial creatures are inexorably subject, there can be no alternative to attributing to them a mind which differs in degree, but not in kind, from that of man. Indeed, it has become a commonplace to regard a bird as the emblem of freedom, the enjoyment of which predicates a large measure of freedom of will, with all that this implies in philosophy and natural history. If we scrupulously think out the implications of the power of *recognition*, and action based upon recognition, we are unable to dispute that a night-jar, for example, employing recognition as the means of

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locating year by year the same spot in space on a barren moor after a voyage of perhaps thousands of miles in other lands, is giving a demonstration of reasoning that compares very favourably with our own, if indeed it does not transcend it in the application of memory to objective action. Again, if cold or lack of food or love of home, and therefore the memory of it, provides a motive to a bird to seek more suitable surroundings, the bird must have not only knowledge and memory but the power of decision based upon calculation from known and reasonable premises. It is true that all ornithologists and laymen who postulate a mind in birds are presented with many awkward dilemmas which seem blatantly to contradict that assumption. The contented sitting of a bird upon stones instead of eggs; the perfectly contented rearing of a cuckoo by a tiny foster-parent; the return of a chicken to the spot on which its house stood when the house has been removed; and the careful laying of its eggs in the water by a wild mallard whose nest has been taken off the water, are familiar to observers. Such dilemmas, by the score, are, however, treated as individual aberrations of mind or mysteries yet to be elucidated, accentuating rather than invalidating the belief that birds pilot themselves through life by the exercise of a dimly reasoning and calculating mind.

If there were no physical laws inexorably to govern the coming and going, the homing and the mating, of these tiny feathered creatures, then, indeed, there could be no alternative to the endowment of birds with a measure of free-will and thus with a supernatural attribute which would form a common denominator between man and the animal kingdom, thereby furnishing a powerful argument in favour of the truth of the theory of evolution and against the traditional belief in Creation as a completed act, with man utterly apart from all the animal kingdom. If, on the other hand, it can be shown beyond the possibility of dispute that birds are the slaves of physical circumstances over which they can exercise no control, and of the existence of which they must necessarily be unconscious, we are on the high-road to a simple explanation of the broad aspects of the phenomenon of migration and to a *quantitative* disproof of mind in the feathered portion of Creation.

Now there are two laws which do, in fact, govern

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absolutely the movement of birds on the wing, and they have been enunciated elsewhere* by the writer as the "First and Second Laws of Currents." These laws are laws in the strictly scientific sense of the last century: they are in no sense that partial contradiction in terms—a scientific theory. They are shortly as follows:

I. No bird or machine can experience any pressure from the movement of the medium in which it is moving and operating.

This may be amplified and expressed as follows: A bird or any other air-borne body in flight feels only a dead calm so far as wind-pressure is concerned, even in a gale of wind. It feels neither the force nor the direction of the wind except possibly a momentary sensation due to change of inertia if, in the immediate region of the diminutive area it occupies, a sharp variation in speed or direction of wind occurs. In the open and unobstructed spaces of the atmosphere it is doubtful if such variations obtain.

II. Air-borne bodies heading continuously for a *fixed* spot on the earth or sea, near or distant, and flying through an intervening air-current, *must proceed on a curve*, and can arrive at their destination in one way and in one way only, that way being exactly and unconsciously head to wind. Thus the alighting speed of a bird must always be the difference of its own flight speed and the wind speed without any volition or calculation on the part of the bird.

The accuracy of the First Law of Currents will not, it is hazarded, be disputed by any physicist, and its truth and meaning can, perhaps, be most simply grasped by a layman, who may not previously have considered the matter, if he thinks of the phenomenon of a fly flying in the enclosed and still air of the saloon of an ocean-liner under way. A great body of wind—moving atmosphere—is to a bird on the wing what the moving, but still, air of the liner's saloon is to the fly flying within its depths. Both, in fact, are flying in a dead calm, but this calm is a *moving calm*. Both experience a draught from right ahead between their eyes, and of a strength equal to their own proper flight speed, irrespective of the bodily movement of the air in which they are flying. Their

* "This Bondage." Murray. 1929.

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speed over the land or sea, as with airships or aeroplanes, is the sum, the difference, or the resolved speeds of the wind and the flight speed according as to whether the birds' flight is directly with, directly against, or across the direction of the moving calm—the wind.

§ The accuracy of the Second Law of Currents will, it is believed, be immediately apparent to any man who has headed a boat or a ship steadily for a stake or a buoy secured in mid-stream. In nature this curve can be accurately and simply observed by watching a water-rat cross a stream. No water-rat ever *allows* for the current, but always crosses the stream on a curve. In other words Law, and not thought, governs the course of the passage.

Now these two Laws of dynamics surely enable us to interpret *generally* the arrival and departure of the birds, but in themselves they cannot provide a complete solution to bird-migration. We need to make one assumption, and one only, which, if valid, will give us the master-key. Birds, like fish and flying insects (single medium creatures), have the inherent power to *sense* a given spot in space, this sense of direction, and striving for home, being the sole and automatic, but at the same time amply sufficient, guide in their navigation.

This assumption, it is true, cannot be proved by anatomical, physiological, or other physical researches, but it has the whole weight of scientific and ornithological evidence to buttress it. Countless examples can be given of this imponderable power of orientation to a fixed spot—the birthplace. Indeed, in making this one assumption, the writer leans upon the evidence and assertion of the leading ornithologists of the world rather than observations of his own. Though the evidence from the observed facts seems so ample and conclusive, it is possible, nevertheless, to support the testimony of the eyes, and of careful observation, with mathematical reasoning, and by this simple means.

It is agreed that birds do, in fact, arrive at their destination exactly head to wind. But there is only one means by which a bird can reach its destination through intervening currents exactly head on to the wind, and that means is by heading continually for the spot.

The two Laws of Currents can have no exception, for otherwise they would not be laws. With these and our one assumption as our premises, we can now approach

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any example of bird movement in space with confidence that a scientific and incontrovertible explanation will be forthcoming.

Let us take the "migration" of the swallow, not because this phenomenon differs in any respect from the "migration" of any other bird, but because it is the movement most readily observable, since swallows spend the daylight hours on the wing for all to see and watch.

Consider a family of swallows reared this spring at the last year's birthplace of the parents. By September the fully fledged young will be strong upon the wing, but their flight speed will be less than that of the parent birds, just as the flight speed of the parents will differ, if there is any difference, no matter how slight, in the size and weight of the two birds. We thus have to consider three distinct speeds of flight in a single family.

For the sake of simplicity we will discuss one bird only, taking the old male. Let us assume that this bird's flight speed *in still air* is 50 m.p.h. Throughout the normally quiescent spring and summer months the bird can clearly retain itself at its home while hunting its food all day upon the wing. In the autumn, however, as the atmosphere becomes progressively unstable, the bird will experience a growing difficulty in remaining at home, a difficulty that will become an impossibility when the speed of the wind bears a near relation to the bird's flight speed. Thus in so slight a wind as 25 m.p.h. the bird will frequently chase its food in the same direction as the moving atmosphere, at such a time covering the ground at 75 m.p.h. When heading again for home, however, its speed over the ground will fall to 25 m.p.h. Under such circumstances the bird may still be able to return to its home, *if these conditions are not unduly protracted*. Increase the speed of the wind to 40 m.p.h. and the bird must inevitably begin to drift to leeward because it will constantly be heading away from home in pursuit of its food at 90 m.p.h., whereas when heading for home it will make good 10 m.p.h. only over the ground. Increase the wind to the force of an equinoctial gale and the swallows, like all other birds subject to it, will pass away to leeward at a speed which may well amount to several hundred miles a day, notwithstanding that they constantly shape a course for home when not pursuing food. As soon as we appreciate that what we call wind is to an

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air-borne body a great silent moving calm upon the full speed and direction of which the bird's flight speed and course are merely superimposed, a great array of facts becomes self-evident.

Thus the extent of the drift of the members of a swallow family will differ day by day. The weaker fliers will perforce be carried from their home first, the old birds last. Similarly, the males and females will drift at different speeds, thus ensuring the separation of the sexes after the breeding season. Should a gale arise and the speed of the wind exceed the flight speed of the swallow, the birds will perforce have to remain on the wing until the speed of the wind is less than their own flight speed, because no bird alights except head to wind, and no bird can alight *backwards*. Hence we shall expect to find flocks of tired birds after the equinox. Strong winds will tend to herd birds, the northerly birds drifting down upon the more southern birds, which experience the wind later. Such flocks of birds must inevitably tend to comprise birds of the same sex and age, because the flight speeds of all vary. Slightly varying speed of flight is thus an inevitable cause of the separation of the sexes. Thus, when we see a great flock of swallows resting on telegraph wires, this flock is without doubt for the most part a collection of birds of the same sex and age from further north, the birds of our immediate neighbourhood having in all probability drifted off earlier.

All these swallows have one home only, and that home is their birthplace. They drift backwards to the south and east, and become homeless vagrants in southern and south-easterly countries, as Mr. T. A. Coward has emphasized. When the prevailing winds turn to south and south-east, the unvarying trend of the birds towards their homes will be *rewarded*, and the swallows will once again advance from the south, appearing, first singly, and then in battalions. The first swallows sighted in the south of England will almost certainly be residents of the far north—birds, that is to say, on the northern edge of the great swallow area that shifts north-west and south-east with the seasonal ebb and flow of the great sun-controlled aerial tides, for such, in truth, are the winds. At any particular home the birds that survive the past winter drift will generally arrive in the order of male, female, young, according to their flight speeds,

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which will have governed the extent of their respective drift to the southward in the autumn.

It will be readily appreciated that this vast, involuntary seasonal drift, which we term *migration*, ensures to every bird its essential requirements of warmth and food without a glimmering of understanding on the part of nature's beneficiaries. Temperature, which governs the winds, as it governs most natural phenomena, provides simultaneously the necessity and the means for the coming and going of the birds. This vast movement twice a year is carried out by the birds in complete unconsciousness, for they do not feel a breath of those winds which are bearing them away to leeward or ensuring their home-coming. Neither can they recognize landmarks on their route, because they depart and return on great curves for reasons previously given. It is more than doubtful if a bird consciously recognizes its own nest or birthplace, as scores of curious experiments go to prove. Mating also must be arranged by nature for the birds, their faithfulness to a last year's mate, which they have not seen in the interval of eight months, being assured by the orientation of all the occupants of last year's nest to the same spot. If last year's mate has not survived, another occupant may arrive a little later to take its place as the new parent of the family.

It can be said with confidence that ornithologists of great experience will find that these laws account for many strange episodes in the life-history of birds which by any other means must remain mysteries, unless birds are credited with free-will and the power of reasoning.

In conclusion, the writer would emphasize how extraordinarily deceptive appearance and observation must be, when watching birds on the wing, if the laws of flight are overlooked. Who could doubt from observation that a seagull uses its wings as sails when it spreads them rigidly in a gale of wind? The wings of birds are, however, never sails. Wings are oars, or fins, with which birds propel themselves, or swim, in the great restless ocean of the air. No wind pressure has ever impinged upon the wings of a bird in flight.

Legal Expenses and the House of Lords

By Cyril Pearce

THE striking article, "All Quiet on the Legal Front," points to the pressing necessity for the reform of our legal system. It is an interesting occupation for a professional lawyer to inquire into the views (if any) of that system generally held by laymen. The class of laymen particularly referred to comprises everyone who engages in business on his own account, who owns any appreciable amount of private property, and whose affairs bring him into constant contact with his fellows. Life is such that questions of more or less friendly dispute are continually arising between members of this class which it is the function of the law to decide. Our Courts of Civil Justice are provided and maintained by the State for the very purpose of adjusting these differences, and the success of this social service should therefore be measured by the extent to which it is appreciated and used by the class mentioned. Hence the importance of taking the layman's view.

The layman's attitude is majestic in its absurdity. It combines a reverential admiration for His Majesty's judges with a settled intention not to have anything to do with them. He is rightly proud of the fact that his judges are the most learned, impartial, and dignified of the civilized world, and that the business of the Courts is conducted with a probity and decorum unknown in other countries. On the other hand, he believes that the only people who derive any real benefit from the system are the lawyers; he has never met anyone who, in the long run, gained anything by going to law; while he knows of many who have been ruined by litigation. The High Court is an ideal forum for millionaires, Government departments, large trading corporations, and paupers (who have nothing to lose). For the man of moderate means it is an institution to be respected and eschewed. Justice, enthroned upon a grand, but inaccessible, eminence, is encircled with an aura of the most dignified disrepute. And

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the remarkable thing is that nobody cares. After all, one can generally steer clear of the law with a little tact and common-sense; and anyone who is foolish enough to become involved in litigation does not deserve much sympathy.

This deplorable conception represents the exact truth. In any action where the amount at stake is less than four figures, the pecuniary risk (if not the actual expense) incurred by the plaintiff is entirely disproportionate to the value of the matter in issue. The following case provides an illustration from actual experience: A city merchant had a confidential clerk whom he trusted. It was his practice to sign cheques for small amounts when the clerk told him that petty cash was required. One of these cheques was fraudulently altered by the clerk after his master's signature had been obtained, the amount being changed from £2 to £120. The bank paid this sum to the clerk over the counter, and the merchant sued the bank to recover his money. He succeeded. The bank appealed to the Court of Appeal, but the merchant succeeded again. The bank then appealed to the House of Lords, where the appeal was allowed, and the merchant was ordered to pay the whole costs of the three hearings. This dispute over £120 accordingly cost the merchant several thousands of pounds, much of which would have been saved if he had not had the misfortune to win his case in the first place.

There is, unfortunately, nothing unusual about this example. Almost every decision of the House of Lords involves one party or the other in legal expenses of more than £1,000. This in itself is sufficiently disturbing; but when, as in the case cited, the party who ultimately has to pay the whole costs has been consistently successful before the lower Courts, the injustice of the situation becomes serious. Moreover, doubts and disagreements are not unknown even in the House of Lords. It is not extravagant to suppose the case of a litigant who, after obtaining the unanimous opinion in his favour of the trial judge and three judges of the Court of Appeal, is defeated by a majority of three judges against two in the House of Lords. He gets no value at all for the six judges who were for him, but has to pay by the

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thousand for the three who were against him. Only the dogged indifference of the legal profession to these prodigal results can account for the continuance of the system.

The evil is steadily becoming worse, owing to the ever-increasing prominence of large corporations in everyday affairs. Commercial interests are continually shifting out of the hands of small owners into the hands of large and wealthy companies; and the disparity of means between opposing litigants tends to be much greater than it was half a century ago. The private individual whose rights are infringed will often find that the proposed defendant to his action enjoys a subscribed capital of a quarter of a million pounds, and is only too willing to ventilate the dispute in the House of Lords. But the law is quite out of touch with this position. In no practical feature do I resemble the Gas Light and Coke Company or the Halifax Corporation. Nevertheless, we are humorously deemed to be equal before the law. The House of Lords opens its doors to all at the same fee, and in so doing places a bludgeon in the hand of the wealthy and unscrupulous litigant. Suppose a small man owns a useful patent, which stands in the way of a large corporation formed for the purpose of exploiting some commercial process. What is simpler than for the corporation to infringe the patent and announce in answer to his remonstrances that they are advised that there is some doubt as to its validity and are prepared to contest the point, if necessary, up to the House of Lords? In this way the complaint as to infringement is easily silenced—a convenient and unobtrusive method of robbery.

The abolition of the judicial functions of the House of Lords would obviously go a long way towards reinstating the law in the affections of the lay public. As long ago as 1873 this was seen to be a desirable reform. The Act of that year which constituted the Supreme Court of Judicature intended that this court should be what its name expresses, and accordingly abolished the right of appeal to the House of Lords; but the operation of this provision was suspended for some time, and it was ultimately repealed by the Appellate Jurisdiction Act of 1876.

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The causes of this reversal of policy are worth recording. Although in 1873 the abolition of appeals to the House of Lords was emphatically demanded by public opinion in this country, there appeared to be no desire for any change in Scotland or Ireland. Appeals from the Scottish or Irish Courts were therefore not dealt with by the Bill. Provision was made, however, for strengthening the proposed Court of Appeal by the addition of Scottish and Irish judges, in the hope that at some future time the Scottish and Irish lawyers might desire to participate in the scheme. The second reading was debated in both Houses of Parliament by all the ablest lawyers of the day, and was carried without a division in either. It was subsequently felt, however, to be somewhat unsatisfactory that the final Court of Appeal should not be the same for all parts of the United Kingdom, and efforts were made to bring the Scotchmen and Irishmen into line with the scheme. Unfortunately the latter stood on their dignity, and refused to have their own decisions reviewed by a mere Court of Appeal in England. This difficulty could probably have been surmounted had not advantage been taken of it by a clique of diehards, headed by Lords Redesdale and Penzance, who took the opportunity to foster a new opposition to the reform in this country where none had existed before. The result was a compromise which ended in the creation of the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary and the retention of the House of Lords in a reconstituted form. The situation is well described in a leading article published in the *Times* of June 13, 1876: "It must be admitted that the enemies whose consent to a substantial change has been secured by an apparent maintenance of old forms did not belong exclusively to either political party. Thus, they were found in Scotland and Ireland in quarters supposed to be freed from political passion, though apparently not emancipated from personal jealousies. The people of Scotland were quite content with a Final Court of Appeal extra-Parliamentary in form and substance, but the honour of some of the occupants of the Scotch Bench was touched by the proposal. A similar feeling was easily excited in Ireland. In England the Committee

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formed to defend the Appellate Jurisdiction of the House of Lords was reinforced by men whose presence upon it astonished all but those who have studied the power of lingering superstitions."

Let us now look at the modern arguments in favour of the retention of this appellate jurisdiction. The first argument would not deserve serious consideration at all, if it were not that it springs spontaneously to the lips of lawyers whenever the subject is mentioned. "But," they say, "if you abolish the House of Lords, what are you going to do when the Court of Appeal goes wrong?" In one sense this remark is almost meaningless; for if there were no higher tribunal, the Court of Appeal never could go wrong. The House of Lords is at present always right simply because there is no higher Court to reverse its decisions; and what it pronounces to be the law accordingly is the law.

What is perhaps intended by this line of reasoning is that two appeals are better than one. This was apparently the objection of Lord Penzance, who said in 1875 that "the Act of 1873 . . . contained one provision which he had always held to be most detrimental, namely, that one Court in England hearing between 400 and 500 appeals a year should pronounce judgments that were absolutely irreversible for all time, except through an Act of Parliament. A Court possessed of that power would have been capable of doing an inconceivable amount of harm to the judicature of this country." This is, of course, precisely the power which is possessed by the judicial side of the House of Lords to-day, although it only deals with fifty or sixty appeals in the course of the year. If the argument is that a Court which sits continuously and hears a large number of cases is likely to make more mistakes (in proportion) than one which sits intermittently and hears a smaller number, the answer must be that this is merely a matter of opinion which can neither be proved nor disproved. Certain it is, however, that the best-informed opinion of 1873 thought nothing of this objection and saw, on the contrary, overwhelming reasons for leaving the final decision with the Court of Appeal.

In moving the second reading of the Bill of 1873 in

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the House of Lords, Lord Selborne said: "There is generally a system of double appeal for the suitor. I never concealed my opinion that this is not a good system. Where you have got a good Court, with sufficient judicial power to command the confidence of the country, it is better that there should be no double appeal . . . My opinion is that if you establish an adequate Court, it is desirable for the parties and for the general interest of the country that the decision of that Court should be final, and that you should not multiply appeals. You can never escape by going through any number of Courts of Appeal from the risk of differences of opinion in each and every one of them, and from doubts arising as to whether the last Court decided better than the one before it. What you want is to make as good a Court as possible, and to give it all the power and authority you can, and that, in my humble judgment, is best accomplished by making it final." Lord Hatherley expressed "his entire concurrence with the essential principles of the Bill from beginning to end"; while Lord Chelmsford "had long been of opinion that it was quite impossible for their Lordships, with the feeling which existed on the subject in the public mind, to retain the appellate jurisdiction of their Lordships' House." As mentioned above, the motion was carried *nem. con.*

In the Commons opinion was equally emphatic. Lord Coleridge (then Attorney-General) only expressed the general feeling when he said: "No man, whatever might be his view of the constitutional position of the House of Lords, who had any knowledge of its practical working, could deny that a more indefensible institution as a judicial institution it was hardly possible to conceive. Although lawyers had been able to maintain a poor sort of a living, still everyone knew that the people who went into a Court of Law were greatly the exception. Very few persons, comparatively speaking, ever went to law, and very few who had ever gone would go again; and those people who had enjoyed the luxury of an appeal to the House of Lords must be very few indeed. When they had got a great appeal decided by that august tribunal, and when they had the satisfaction of paying the highly deserving recipients whom they must pay for

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that luxury, both sides probably went away with a thankful feeling of relief, and with a hope that they would never hear of the House of Lords again in its judicial capacity For his part, he would say that if this Bill did nothing else but get rid of the House of Lords as a judicial tribunal, it would be worth while to pass it."

Even Disraeli, as leader of the opposition, had nothing but praise to bestow on the two main proposals of the Bill (the fusion of law and equity and the abolition of appeals to the House of Lords), which he described as "those two great objects which practical men and philosophers, the Press, and the learned Committees and Commissions of Inquiry had all agreed to recommend, and which now, after a considerable number of years, have been generally accepted by all those leading men who have given their minds to the subject as most desirable objects to accomplish."

It is true that one of the main objections to the House of Lords at that time was its personnel, which has admittedly been much strengthened by the creation of the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary. But even so, it is difficult in face of the opinions above quoted to make out any case for the double right of appeal.

But then it is said that there are reasons why the House of Lords, as a judicial body, is more likely to decide rightly than the Court of Appeal. Anyone who has seen both bodies at work may be excused for doubting this proposition. The suggestion is, however, that several of the Law Lords also play an active part in the legislative deliberations of the House, and that they are thereby brought into touch with current social problems and tendencies. They are thus supposed to be able to take a broader and more perspicuous view of important legal problems than is open to the judges, whose "judicial ignorance" of many subjects is assumed to be emphasized by the cloistral conditions of their daily work. It is certainly true that the Law Lords see more of public affairs than the judges, but whether their decisions are thereby rendered more helpful or consistent is open to doubt. At any rate, a lawyer can quickly pick out a good many which cannot be so described. It is worth mentioning some of them.

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Sorrell v. Smith, 1925 A.C. 700, was carried to the House of Lords for the very purpose of elucidating a most important branch of the law (namely, commercial boycotting and conspiracy) which had been enveloped in obscurity by the previous decisions of the House. It was the confident hope of the profession that the law would at last be stated clearly and authoritatively. But there was no unanimity even on general principles among their lordships, and the judgments in this case have only emphasized the doubts which they were invited to dispel.

In *Neville v. London Express Newspapers, Ltd.*, 1919 A.C. 368, which dealt with the action of maintenance, a curious department of the law was rendered more curious by a twofold decision, the second branch of which deprives the first of any importance. The division of opinion in this case was such that the result arrived at accorded with the views of one only of the five members who sat on the appeal.

Williams Bros. v. Agius, 1914 A.C. 510, decided that in estimating the damages to be awarded for non-delivery of goods, the existence of sub-contracts made by the buyer cannot be taken into account. *Hall v. Pim (Junior) & Co.*, 33 Com. Cas. 324, decided the contrary. "I hope," said a learned Lord Justice quite recently, "that the House of Lords may soon have an opportunity of explaining how their decision in *Hall v. Pim (Junior) & Co.* is to be reconciled with their decision in *Williams Bros. v. Agius*." (See 1929, 1 K.B., at p. 410.)

Another pair of cases which will perplex many lawyers and all laymen is *Cooke v. Midland G.W.R. Co.*, 1909 A.C. 229, and *Addie and Sons v. Dumbreck*, 1929 A.C. 358; and yet another is *Colls v. Home and Colonial Stores*, 1904 A.C. 179, and *Jolly v. Kine*, 1907 A.C. 1. We may add to these the cases (admittedly not very numerous) in which the House of Lords has surprised the profession and the public by declaring the law to be such that the legislature has immediately altered it. A fair example of this process is *Taff Vale Railway v. Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants*, 1901, A.C. 426, which resulted in Section 4 of the Trade Disputes Act, 1906. In such a case the general understanding of the law on a particular point is suddenly upset by one body

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and restored by another at great expense, which is concentrated on the pockets of a few individuals.

Let us now glance at the proportions in which appeals to the House of Lords are successful. The six years from 1922 to 1927 (inclusive) yielded 264 English appeals which were finally adjudicated by the House. Of these, 187 were dismissed and 77 were allowed (entirely or in part), giving a proportion of 2.4 to 1. This, however, probably exaggerates the number of successful appeals, since the year 1924 appears to have been quite unusual in this respect. If this year is omitted from the series, we have 223 appeals, of which 167 were dismissed and 56 were allowed. This gives an almost exact proportion of 3 to 1, which is probably about right. The matter may be further tested by examining the cases in which the orders of the Court of Appeal have been upset. The bound volumes of appeal cases for the years 1927 and 1928 contain reports of twenty of such cases; and it will be found that in no less than eleven of these there were divisions of opinion in the House of Lords, and in nine only were the appeals unanimously allowed. If these figures prove anything, they prove the truth of Lord Selborne's remark already quoted: "You can never escape by going through any number of Courts of Appeal from the risk of differences of opinion in each and every one of them, and from doubts arising as to whether the last Court decided better than the one before it."

On the other hand, we must admit that certain decisions of the House of Lords are monuments of learning and good sense and have helped from time to time to rationalize the law. The cases above mentioned are only cited to show that those who oppose the House of Lords on purely juristic grounds have a good deal to say for themselves. Let us, however, assume that the argument under discussion is entirely sound; and let us admit that the conclusions of the Law Lords sometimes ascend to heights of theoretical rightness which cannot be scaled by the Lords Justices of Appeal. Even on this assumption the question presents itself whether the results obtained are so numerous or striking as to give a return for the huge expense which falls on the particular litigants, or for the annual bill of £50,000, which is paid

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by the public for the salaries and pensions of the Law Lords.

But at this point another and far more fundamental consideration intervenes. The triumphs of pure logic which are won by the highest tribunal are no doubt gratifying to lawyers. To the lay public they are of very little significance. The civil law is administered by lawyers for the benefit of lawyers; and the feast of reason which is occasionally dished up by the House of Lords is served and relished exclusively in the Temple. The long delays and fascinating interlocutory contests of a leading case are of no interest to the public at all. The average litigant does not delight in spending two or three years and two or three thousand pounds in procuring a final decision, however harmonious the result may be with the obscurer doctrines of the Common Law. He is much more concerned to have his case decided quickly and cheaply than to have it decided so very rightly. Law, like medicine, is a service which should be placed within easy reach of all who need it. And a good and rapid service at popular prices is much more to be desired than a slightly better service at prohibitive prices and involving long delays. The wilful blindness of the legal profession to this transparent truth results in the moribund condition in which we find it to-day. The goose which laid the golden eggs has discovered at last what an utter goose it was to do so. The layman who desires a decision on his rights to-day prefers to take it quickly and cheaply from an arbitrator, who may be devoid of judicial experience and prejudiced by his own commercial interests, to going before the judges whose learning and impartiality he so much admires, and who are provided by the State for the very purpose of resolving his difficulties. His state of mind is neatly expressed in the Report on the Expense of Litigation recently issued by the London Chamber of Commerce: "It is as if a person who wished to buy a cheap car were told that he could only have a Rolls or a Daimler. His answer would be that if it is a case of either a Rolls or a Daimler or no car, then he must go without a car. He would at once admit that the Rolls or Daimler was the best of cars but would say that he could not afford it. So with our present system of litigation."

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Then, again, it has been argued that the deliberations of the House of Lords invest the substantive law with a dignity and importance which have much to do with the respect in which it is generally held. This may be true; but the argument must go further than this, and must suggest that there would be an insufficient respect for the law if the final decision in civil cases rested with the Court of Appeal. This view will not commend itself to anyone who takes the trouble to gauge the respect in which the Court of Appeal is held already by the general public. This respect is found to be quite surprising in its intensity. It may, indeed, be less marked than the respect accorded to the House of Lords (by those who have never had to pay for an appeal to that body), but even so it is enough to prevent the substantive law from falling into disrepute. The analogy provided by the criminal law supports this view. It is probably in the sphere of criminal justice that the pre-eminence of our Courts over those of other countries is most marked and most appreciated. It is true that there is a method by which a criminal case can be carried to the House of Lords, but this is so seldom used that it need not be taken into consideration, and, in fact, the final decision on all points of law and practice rests with the three judges of the Court of Criminal Appeal. This Court is not in theory so strong a judicial body as the Civil Court of Appeal, yet its prestige is amply sufficient to satisfy the public.

Lastly, we have the old story of the Scotchmen and the Irishmen. Conditions have changed a good deal since 1875, and it may be that the link which connects the jurisprudence of the three countries is not now cherished as much as it then was. Certainly we find no desire in Southern Ireland for any kind of final appeal outside that country. The Northern Irish only send two or three appeals each year to the House of Lords; and since they have not the contempt for English institutions which is evinced by their neighbours, they might perhaps be found willing to submit these cases to the English Court of Appeal, reinforced, if necessary, by the presence of an Irish expert. Scotland contributes fifteen to twenty appeals in the course of the year. It is possible that the submission of these cases to the House

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of Lords is regarded as a valuable privilege. But even if it is, there is no reason in logic why the same House should remain the final Court of Appeal for England. The law of Scotland differs already in numerous respects from our own, and to insist upon the same ultimate Court of Appeal for the two systems is only to disguise the divergence which is in fact admitted. To the English layman this artificial symmetry of institutions is surely dear at any price.

If the foregoing remarks give a fair statement of the case for retaining the appellate functions of the House of Lords, it is evident that the reform which was unfortunately side-tracked in 1876 is now long overdue. But the abolition of appeals to the House of Lords is only a first step towards the reform that is needed. The curtailment of the number of possible appeals undoubtedly lifts a burden off the litigant of modest means; but it does not go far enough. Let us suppose a dispute between A and B relating to the construction of a contract and involving a sum of £200 or £300. A brings an action to recover this amount, and the trial judge decides in his favour and gives judgment against B with costs. B appeals, and the Court of Appeal decide that the trial judge was wrong in the view he took. Judgment is accordingly entered for B, and A is ordered to pay the costs both of the appeal and of the original hearing. From B's point of view this is as it should be. Having been in the right, he obviously ought to have his costs paid. At the same time it is hard on A. It was not his fault that the trial judge went wrong; but he has to pay twice over because one judge decided in his favour. And this expense is probably out of all proportion to the value of his original claim. Complete justice could only be done if the Court of Appeal could order that B's costs of the original hearing should be paid by A, and that both parties' costs of the appeal should be borne by the State. In this way the result is made to be precisely what it would have been if the trial judge had decided rightly, and the liability for costs of the unsuccessful litigant remains the same whether he is defeated in the first instance or only on appeal. This, of course, although

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the most typical case, is not the only case calling for insurance against costs thrown away. Sometimes a new trial has to be ordered, and in this event the insurance fund will have to provide both the costs of the appeal and the costs of the original trial. There may be, moreover, certain intermediate cases where the order of the trial judge is varied or reversed owing to fresh evidence discovered since the hearing, or where for some other reason it appears that the imperfection of the original decision is due rather to the conduct of one of the parties than to the error of the judge. In such cases the Court of Appeal should have a discretion to decide whether any, or what proportion, of the costs should be paid out of the fund.

The broad effect of such an insurance plan is that either a plaintiff or a defendant will be able to make a fair estimate at the time when proceedings are begun of the maximum that they can cost him if he loses. This is the very thing that the layman wants most to know when he contemplates enforcing his rights. But under the present system he can only be told what is the least he may possibly have to pay and what is the most; and the disparity between the two figures is often enough to make him pocket his grievance and withdraw instructions from his lawyers.

This scheme no doubt requires money; but not so much as one might think. It is to be remembered that it only applies to appeals which are successful. If A loses in the first place, he will not be encouraged to appeal any more than he is at present. If he does so, and loses again, there is no hardship involved in his having to pay the costs twice over. The State will only pay when its officers are shown to have made mistakes. Available statistics show that about one appeal in three is successful, giving an average yearly total of about 110. Of these about 30 to 35 will be interlocutory appeals; that is to say, appeals upon small points of practice which are quickly disposed of. The taxed costs of both parties to such appeals would hardly in any case exceed £50 and would generally be much less. The costs of the final appeals are extremely difficult to estimate, but if we allow an average cost

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of £250, we must be somewhere near the mark. It will thus be seen that an annual sum of about £20,000 might be sufficient to finance the scheme.

In these days when Governments think in millions and the taxpayer does not dare to think at all, such a sum could no doubt be unobtrusively raised by general taxation; but the abolition of appeals to the House of Lords will render even this expedient unnecessary. Even if the present system is left untouched so far as Scottish and Irish appeals are concerned, it is possible that enough money will be saved in the long run. For the withdrawal of English appeals will reduce the judicial business of the House of Lords to little more than one-third of its present volume, and it may then be found that the number of Lords of Appeal in Ordinary can be reduced from six to three. It is true that much of the work of the Law Lords lies in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, so that the proposed reduction would have an effect upon that body as well as upon the House of Lords. But the Judicial Committee receives a great deal of help from other quarters, and could probably carry on its work satisfactorily with the diminished staff of Law Lords which is suggested. The proposed reduction would involve a saving of £18,000 per year in salaries, and a further saving of a substantial amount in that it would cut down the number of possible recipients of pensions. This saving, if not wholly sufficient, would go a very long way to finance the State insurance against successful appeals which has been outlined above.

The adoption of this system of reform is surely worth a trial, if only for the substantial reduction effected in the price of justice. The Law has been deemed an ass for so long that perhaps the name will stick for ever; but even an ass is not without attraction if one can ride on him for a penny.

Bodysnatchers of Literature

By John Shand

If I were the censor of plays, a private law would compel me to prohibit all dramatizations of famous novels. The process would be automatic and no exceptions would be made. For despite the fact that nine times out of ten they fail to make even a financial success of their ghoulish work, these bodysnatchers of literature are always with us. Further and more effective discouragement should therefore be arranged for them.

The mentality of adapters or dramatizers might be investigated by competent psychologists, and the results published. Some of them, surely, would be found to be suffering from temporary or permanent disability to contrive plots and characters of their own. For instance, it was Mr. John Drinkwater who dismembered *The Mayor of Casterbridge* for the theatre; and is he not the dramatist who made a fairly good play and several very bad ones with material taken from the biographies of Abraham Lincoln, Mary Stuart, Oliver Cromwell, and Robert E. Lee? The post-Lincoln dramas followed one another quickly into oblivion, and might be described not unfairly as little plays about great people. After a long interval, however, these plays were succeeded by *The Bird In Hand*, a very pleasant comedy which delighted both London and New York audiences, and makes one hope that Mr. Drinkwater will never return to biographies and novels for his dramatic material.

Other of the bodysnatchers might be tabulated as simple ignoramuses—as people who are incapable of appreciating the artistic enormity of maltreating masterpieces of literature to make a playgoers' holiday. Must one include Miss Lena Ashwell in that category? When one remembers the travesty of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* which she manufactured in 1927 for the Century Theatre, one still feels angry enough to do so.

There are also authors who are themselves the victims of their own villainy, who themselves are responsible for

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turning the masterpieces they have created into bad theatrical pieces. It was, very surprisingly, Thomas Hardy, not a Hollywood film magnate, who turned *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* into a dull melodrama; and after that, no one could blame the manager who, a few months ago, revived this piece in order to present in the leading part a lady who could not act but who was said to be Hardy's ideal of Tess. It was, also, no one less than Joseph Conrad who was guilty of spoiling some of his fine fiction for the stage, only to be laughed at for his pains; and again, the playgoers had good excuse for turning down their thumbs, for Conrad's dramatizations made very bad theatre.

Now, if authors like Hardy and Conrad threw their fiction on to the stage for the sake of adding to the few pounds they earned by being masters of literature—well, one would be sorry that they found it necessary; but if the result were successful, one would be cheered by the thought that the unlettered in the auditorium were enjoying themselves and paying for the bread and butter of a great man at the same time. But the sad thing is that these novelists seem ever unable to please the playgoer; which looks very like an "expense of spirit in a waste of shame."

If the ordinary dramatizers, also, would simply admit that they were out to earn a dishonest fiver by adapting a classic, and then proceeded to get the money by filling the box-office, one would find the business at least intelligible. But these people rarely succeed any better than the novelist in earning that fiver, for their work is generally found to be so devoid of entertainment that only the cry of "Fire!" will more quickly empty an auditorium. And as for their aims in writing such plays, these are always of the noblest description. Nothing less than an overwhelming reverence for the original work and a missionary fervour to implant some appreciation of it in the minds of the ignorant is the usual excuse for desecrating it in the theatre.

Were it not the case that each year brings its crop of these plays, it might seem stupid to argue the rights and wrongs of the question since, from the æsthetic point of view, the adaptation of a classic can hardly be

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defended. When a work of art has been completed in one medium of expression, it cannot be translated without loss into another medium. As these dramatizations are always being made, however, the practical query is: Which is the best way to set about adapting a fine novel to the stage? The answer is, I think: Concentrate on writing a good play and forget the book whenever it interferes with the objective. As an example, this is what Mr. Ashley Dukes has done in making his very successful adaptation of *Jew Süß*.

There are really only two courses open to the adapter. He can try to serve the theatre first and write a good play; or he can try first to serve the novelist and give an audience an accurate version of his book. On the face of it, the adapter should have the theatre in mind rather than the book. But it is almost certain that if he is able to construct a piece which can entertain an audience who are mostly ignorant of the original—and such an audience must be postulated—he will have made something so utterly different in content and value from the novel that he may just as well regard the play as a personal creation. And though he should acknowledge his debt by stating that his play was *suggested* by So-and-so's novel, assuredly he should not imply, by using the title, and so on, that he is giving to the playgoer a dramatic *version* of it.

If, on the other hand, the bodysnatcher of literature is so foolish as to believe that he can give in terms of the theatre a tolerably exact version of the novel, he will proceed to grapple with the task of squeezing, cutting and joining various bits and pieces of the story and the dialogue into three acts or a number—generally a large number—of short scenes. In this case, the probability is that he will fall between two stools, and will exasperate those who admire the book without pleasing the playgoer who has never read it. This method therefore cannot be strongly recommended, although it is the one usually adopted. There is a good and obvious reason for this seeming stupidity. Adapters, while they have enough courage—I will call it courage—to spoil a masterpiece of fiction, rarely have sufficient dramatic skill to write a good play on their own account, and so do not have

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that sense of the stage which would show them what a mess of things they are making. And those who are naturally writers for the theatre generally prefer to make plays of their own, without going to the novelists for material.

Adaptations may therefore be said to be rather like sequels. Either they say as well what has already been said before—in which case they are superfluous; or they say it less well—in which case they are tiresome.

Among the many adaptations produced in London during, say, the last five years, the only successful ones I can think of were taken from fiction which belonged to the best-seller or "contemporary literature" class. For instance, Miss Margaret Kennedy's and Mr. Basil Dean's stage version of her novel, *The Constant Nymph*, made such good theatre that the piece ran for over a year. Mr. John Colton's dramatic version of Mr. Somerset Maugham's short story, *Rain*, was extremely entertaining melodrama. Miss G. B. Stern's *Matriarch*, which she made out of her novel, *The Tents of Israel*, had at least the merit of providing a fine part for Mrs. Patrick Campbell; and was good enough drama to please London playgoers for over six months. Mr. Ashley Dukes' adaptation I have already mentioned. Mr. Edgar Wallace is always turning his popular detective stories into plays which are equally popular. And so the list might go on.

It is worth noting that all these adaptations were not only successful as plays but also managed to give their respective audiences an approximate *taste* of the books they were taken from; and that in contrast, all the adaptations which were complete failures from the box-office point of view such as *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *Crime and Punishment*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *The Idiot*, *Pickwick*, *The Brothers Karamazoff*, and *Daniel Deronda*, to name no more, were all, as you see, taken from classic books; and if they failed as plays, they failed still more ignominiously as attempts to show a theatre audience what the originals were like. This leads to the conclusion—foregone, I suppose—that a novel will resist the attempt to make a play of it in direct proportion to its value as a work of literature. Indeed, I have

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never seen an adaptation of a great novel which was anything but a travesty of it, and I never expect to see one.

Take, for analysis, two such interesting examples as Thomas Hardy's stage version of "Tess," and Mr. Drinkwater's attempt to make a play from "The Mayor of Casterbridge." These two are the best adaptations of classic novels I have seen, not the worst; yet what a painful thing it was to sit in the theatre with these plays! In one case the novelist himself, in the other a practising dramatist of some literary reputation; and neither the one nor the other could do better than bore an audience while he misrepresented and distorted and vulgarized the book. All that remained of these two wonderful novels by the time they reached the stage was a halfpennyworth of drama to an intolerable deal of scenes.

Adaptations generally flower into a superfluity of scenes owing to the excess of material crying to be used in the short three hours' traffic of the stage; but Mr. Drinkwater probably created a record with the seventeen scenes which he called *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. Such a number meant that each scene, of course, was extremely short, so that hardly had the action got under way and the interest of the audience been enlisted when the curtain was drawn, and we had to wait in darkness while "several months" passed by. These intervals of time were unfortunately made quite real by the stage hands, while they changed the scene, until the audience began to murmur sleepily that, since it did not come to the theatre to see scene-shifters' triumphs, scene-shifters' failures were consequently unendurable. Such homœopathic doses of Hardy also killed all chance of any acting; for no sooner had the players established communication with the audience—and this is a gradual process and cannot be done in a minute, except by a powerful personality—than they were interrupted by that fatal drawing of the curtain, and so had to keep on beginning all over again. The inevitable result was a lack of fire on the stage, and a state of coma in the auditorium.

Hardy's own attempt had more drama in it; but the result was really worse from the artistic point of view.

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For his classic tragedy was transformed by adaptation to the stage into such banal melodrama that, at its production, I was compelled to label it, *Tess of the Melville Brothers*. Concentrated into a play, this epic story dwindled into a badly told tale of seduction and murder. The tragic mood conjured into being by the artist in words vanished in the limelight. The reality of the characters and the beauty of the background against which they move were so lost in the false fire of the footlights that one doubted for a moment whether they were present even in the book. Losing her significance as the victim of the gods, Tess became the unimportant prey of an unskilful Sardou. Dorsetshire peasants, who in the novel are essential representatives of English humour, were transformed into stage rustics—a truly horrible fate for them. The dewy milkmaids of Talbothays giggled and flirted like so many musical comedy wenches. Subordinate situations and characters grew giant-like in the theatre, obscured the main theme, and dwarfed the story as a whole into a disconnected series of nearly incomprehensible incidents. Actions were given without motives, important changes of mood and situation took place without adequate or even any explanation. Of organic unity there was none at all. That black-moustached seducer, Alec, who is but a tool in the hands of the President of the Immortals and who pairs with Angel Clare as the least convincing character in the book, appropriately loomed over the play as if he had scented his melodramatic origin, and became the chief and all too visible cause of Tess's downfall. To substitute Alec for Destiny as the villain of the piece—does not that sufficiently illuminate the vital difference between the values of the story and the play?

These two dramatizations by Hardy and Mr. Drinkwater were, however, blameless masterpieces in comparison with, say, Miss Lena Ashwell's stage version of *Crime and Punishment*. This novel has always impressed me very deeply, and so I shall always remember the way Miss Ashwell set about her horrid task of adapting it for the theatre. The first scene was the pawnbroker's shop, kept by the old woman whom Raskolnikov has determined to kill. The audience, whom we must presume

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not to have read the book, did not know this important point. Raskolnikov entered the shop looking a very dangerous customer, and began to haggle with the women over a silver case he wanted to pawn. He told her he was starving and desperate; and having worked himself into a fury at her refusal to bargain with him, he picked up a chopper and murdered her. Obviously, the impression conveyed by this scene was directly opposite to Dostoievsky's intention. Instead of a premeditated murder we were shown the merely frenzied action of an impulsive fool. And it was not even good theatre; for nothing is less exciting on the stage than violent death, when the dramatist omits to prepare his audience for the event. Moreover, Dostoievsky's Raskolnikov immediately commits a second murder, which is an unpremeditated act of fear, for he has to kill a servant girl in order to escape from the shop unobserved; and it is this deed which causes the collapse of the super-man idea; for he cannot get it off his conscience. This most vital scene was left out of the play! What can be said of such dramatizations but that they are a desecration of literature in a waste of drama? Oh, Dostoievsky, how thou wert translated! Indeed, indeed, Bottom's famous headgear should crown all these stupid body-snatchers; and we, having no magic juice of Oberon upon our eyelids, would agree that the asinine bonnet was very suitably fitted.

The Mint—Yesterday and To-Day

By H. Charles Woods

MOST people know the popularity of the threepenny piece to the North of the Tweed and the suspicion created to-day by the production of a sovereign. Fewer, however, are aware that the British currency has not improved in appearance and quality since the war, that the Royal Mint no longer makes the large annual profits which used to cheer Chancellors of the Exchequer, and that silver has just touched an unprecedently low market price. A still smaller number know that it takes £127,000 in sovereigns to weigh one ton, that the Mint now does work for outside customers, and that it has branches in various parts of the Empire.

To understand more recent developments it is necessary briefly to dip into history. The authority to coin money, though in earlier days often delegated to leading personages and institutions, such as the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the great barons and the more important monasteries, has always been held to be the prerogative of the King. Gold and silver were coined in England before the arrival of the Romans, in the reign of Ethelred thirty-eight mints are said to have existed and, soon after the Norman Conquest, this number seems to have been almost doubled. At that time and during the ensuing one hundred years the functionaries of the Royal Mint came more or less under the control of the Exchequer, and the importance of the officials or moneyers, who supervised the coinage and collected the sums payable to the King, increased. Furthermore, although, until the middle of the last century, the work of coinage continued to be done by moneyers, who made a handsome profit, the influence of the Crown became less and less indirect. The King's profit on the coinage varied from time to time, but it was not until 1850, and as a consequence of a Royal Commission appointed two years earlier, that the con-

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tract system was finally abolished, the work being put into the hands of Civil Servants and the State taking the entire profits.

From the coming of William the Conqueror until 1810, so far as London was concerned, the work of coinage went on within the Tower, and it was here that Sir Isaac Newton, perhaps the most famous Master of the Mint, performed his duties. The last of the local mints disappeared during the reign of William and Mary, the Edinburgh Mint, which had practically ceased to work from the time of the Union, was closed in 1817, and the present Mint, built at a cost of £250,000, was completed in 1811. Situated on Little Tower Hill and therefore just outside the City boundary and within the Borough of Stepney, the latest extension to the buildings was completed about four years ago.

Since 1870, when the Coinage Act established what is really the present regime, the Mastership has been vested in the office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who draws no salary on this account and performs his duties through a Deputy Master and Comptroller of the Mint. That post, occupied for the last eight years by Sir Robert Johnson, is usually filled by promotion from the staff of the Treasury or some other West End office, and it carries with it the control of three distinct departments. The Mint Office, recruited by the ordinary methods prevailing in the public service, and directly controlled by a Chief Clerk, deals with administration and accounting. The Operative Department, under the charge of the superintendent, produces the coins, medals, seals, and stamp plates. For the most part this branch is staffed by men who have passed various examinations and, entering young, have learned their work and gained their experience in the Mint itself. The Assay Section, managed by the Chief Assayer and recruited by competitive examination, is responsible for the fineness of the coinage as laid down by law. With an establishment of somewhat over 200, the actual number of employees usually amounts to between 400 and 500, the difference being made up by unestablished and temporary employees.

The Coinage Acts of 1870 and of 1891 were, and in

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many ways still are, the most important instruments governing the Mint. The former consolidated the existing laws, defined the weight and fineness of each coin of the realm, and gave the Treasury powers it had not previously possessed. The legislation of twenty years later introduced certain modifications of detail, but its most important provision consisted in a State acceptance of the responsibility for wear and tear to the gold coinage of the country. Thus whilst, heretofore, the last holder of gold coin had been responsible for any losses due to light weight or other causes, since 1891 damaged gold has been withdrawn from circulation at its full nominal value and at public expense. From the everyday and practical standpoint this change meant the disappearance of a custom previously quite common. People, especially business men called upon to accept large cash payments, no longer found it necessary to carry their little scales—scales which they used to weigh the coins offered to them and which often to-day are found stored among the treasures of old-fashioned families.

The principal functions of the Royal Mint are to provide gold, silver and copper for circulation, but the systems adopted for gold and for the other metals are different. The sovereign became the standard coin in 1816, and during the ensuing one hundred years about 600 million were issued by London alone. But the Mint, which has coined no gold bullion since 1917, did not purchase gold for its work. On the contrary, prior to 1925 when the Gold Standard Act limited this privilege to the Bank of England, any member of the public was entitled to supply the gold bullion and to have this coined for him free of charge at the rate of £3 17s. 10½d. per oz. troy weight. But the Royal Mint never undertook to deliver such coinage at once and, whilst the privilege was sometimes claimed, most of the banks and still more ordinary citizens preferred to find some simpler method for acquiring gold coins. Under the Charter of 1844 the Bank of England is compelled to buy gold at a minimum price of £3 17s. 9d. per ounce. Equally it sells gold in bars for £3 17s. 10½d. per ounce. In practice, therefore, even before this became compulsory five years ago, it was the usual custom for the public to take

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its bar gold to the Bank of England. By so doing it sacrificed 1½d. per ounce, that is about 5 per cent. for a delay of ten days, but it secured more immediate and therefore cheaper delivery.

The position of silver is entirely different. Since 1816, when they were more or less pushed into the background, silver coins have been mere tokens, and nowadays they are, in fact, worth much less than their face value. By the Coinage Act of 1870, silver is legal tender only for payments up to forty shillings, and copper only for sums up to one shilling. On the other hand, instead of the silver and copper coinage being a charge upon and an expense to the State, the coinage of these metals is or should be highly profitable. Prior to the change in the fineness of silver, authorized by the Act of 1920, the Royal Mint purchased silver in the open market. Before the war an ounce of silver, on an average costing 2s. 2d., produced coins worth 5s. 6d. at a fineness of .925. The manufacture of coppers, made from metal also purchased by the Mint, was equally profitable. Consequently, notwithstanding the fact that the maintenance of the gold and silver at its face value resulted in a heavy charge, in pre-war days a large annual sum used to be handed over by the Mint to the Exchequer.

The outbreak of the war resulted in an abnormal rush for gold, and £36,000,000 worth of sovereigns and half-sovereigns were produced in 1914 and 1915. But there soon came the embargo upon the export of gold, except by the State, and the issue of paper money without a gold backing and, as a result, the earlier demands for gold were dwarfed by urgent calls for silver currency. This was required to pay the troops under arms, for the wages and use of the hugely increased working public, and for governmental expenditure, especially in Arab countries, where a large outlay was thought desirable and silver is particularly popular with the people. As a fact, an estimated £30,000,000 worth of silver in circulation in 1914 is believed to have been doubled before the Armistice.

Developments during the war, and especially conditions accompanying the peace, created an entirely new position and provided openings at home and abroad,

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of which the Government and the Mint have rightly taken advantage. Gold went out of every-day use and is now coined practically only at the newly-established branch mint at Pretoria, and silver rose from 2s. 2d. per ounce to a war-controlled price of about 4s. 2d., that price depending more or less on the dollar. This naturally entailed a heavy fall in profits because it nearly doubled the cost of the silver required to make 5s. 6d. worth of money. But with the release of the market, things became far worse and, in 1920, bullion actually went to 7s. 5½d. per ounce. Such a rise meant that, had it been necessary to coin any silver at the moment of the peak price, there would have been an actual loss to the Government of nearly 2s. on every 5s. 6d. worth of silver coined, excluding the actual expense of the coinage. Equally, though melting down would have been an offence, the public could have sold its silver coins as bullion for more than their face value.

These difficulties resulted in the reduction of the quality of the metal used for coinage. The silver standard of .925 (meaning 11 oz. 2 dwts. of silver to 18 dwts. of alloy), which was actually in vogue until 1920, was probably first introduced into this country by the Saxons. But such a high quality had not always been maintained, for both Henry VIII and Edward VI tampered with the standard, which was again established at .925 by Queen Elizabeth. Though there are many contrary arguments, under new conditions, there was some excuse for the passage of the Coinage Act of 1920, which reduced the quality from .925 to .500, or six ounces of silver to six of alloy. This change infers that, instead of producing 5s. 6d., an ounce of silver makes just over 10s. worth of coinage. A large amount of silver was therefore gained on the conversion, and even had that metal remained at its peak price, governmental loss ought to have been avoided. Indeed, as things have turned out and as bullion has fallen to below its pre-war price, theoretically there should once more be handsome profits. Nevertheless, in addition to the increased wages and other costs of running the Mint, various conditions have led to an average annual excess of expenditure over receipts of about £157,000 during the seven years 1922-28—the

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latest period for which such figures are available. The most important conditions are the following. Much less silver has been required for circulation of late than during the busy years which accompanied the war. Furthermore, all the old silver called in for re-coinage at the lower fineness had to be purchased not at its bullion, but its face value. Lastly, and this is of great importance, the Home Government has been compelled or practically compelled to buy back large quantities of English-coined silver from Australia and South Africa, since these Dominions now produce not only their own gold, but also their token coinage. The Royal Mint has been converted from a silver buying into a selling institution, and this in the face of a falling market. The losses have therefore been unavoidable.

Now let us examine some further problems, the measures taken to meet them, and the extent to which the general home and foreign situation has furthered their realization. The highest quality of work is necessary, a certain number of skilled men have to be kept in regular employment, and, if losses are inevitable, these must be reduced to a minimum. In addition, the standard of the engravers has to be maintained and artistic work always requires to be improved and encouraged. During the re-coinage of the British silver, spread over a number of years, work was more or less plentiful. Furthermore, the Deputy Master is engraver of His Majesty's Seals, and on February 19 Sir Robert Johnson submitted designs to the King for the new Great Seal, required because of the creation of the Irish Free State as a Dominion, and the Mint makes the dies for postage stamps and a number of medals for official purposes. But so far as possible non-governmental work has to be confined to directions where outside firms cannot compete and to such contracts as would only be given to an official institution. These considerations operate especially in regard to contracts coming from abroad, because such contracts usually emanate from foreign governments, who are naturally called upon to justify a heavy expenditure upon their better coinage by having this struck in a recognized factory and under a public supervision. For these reasons, so far as foreign coinage

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contracts are concerned, it must be apparent to any traveller and student of international affairs that the competition is not between the Royal Mint and some other British house, but between Tower Hill and, for instance, the mints of Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, or Utrecht.

Several circumstances have had their effects upon the world coinage situation. After the war the currencies of many of the belligerents had so decreased in value and their exchanges were so unstable that it was useless for them to attempt to use anything except paper down to quite low values. Further, there were the new countries, all or most of which were compelled to start their lives largely either with their own new paper money or with notes willingly or unwillingly taken over from their neighbours or former masters. Such conditions and such fluctuations continued for some years, but in time these countries, old, new or enlarged, required coins to replace their lower-valued paper money.

Whereas, prior to the war, the majority of European countries were large and had one or more mints, now a number of smaller States have come into existence and many of these either have no mints at all or are capable of maintaining a normal supply, but not of providing new issues. For instance, whilst Russia was naturally able to make all her own coinage; Austria-Hungary, with two mints, used to provide the currency for many areas, now ruled by the Succession States. Although Hungary has founded a factory much too large for her own needs and Poland has opened a small mint, capable of providing replacements, there are other countries, like the Baltic States, Roumania, Yugoslavia, and Greece, where no coinage is produced.

These conditions, coupled with the energy and initiative of Sir Robert Johnson, have been responsible for a return to and an expansion of the policy of pre-war days. As regards its medal production, the Mint makes no claim or attempt to establish a monopoly for such work, but now that the rush is over, it is once more ready to undertake it for private institutions. Moreover, during the last seven years, the department has entered into a number of contracts with foreign governments. Though not quite the first, the most important of these

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contracts was that with the Union of the Soviet Republics—undertaken in 1924 in order to help the Leningrad Mint to replace the paper money then in circulation. Russia supplied her own bullion, the weights and sizes of the coins were exactly the same as in Tsarist days and the fineness of the silver for the larger-valued coins was almost as high as that of our own pre-war money. This work kept the Mint fully occupied throughout 1924. It also made the one and two zloty pieces of Poland, the whole of the silver coins of Lithuania, and the one lat and two lati pieces of Latvia, all of which I have seen and used. Furthermore, the British Government has produced gold for Roumania, is now carrying out large contracts with the new Peasant Cabinet of that country, and an agreement has just been signed with Greece for a large supply of silver and pure nickel coins. There have been the silver for Guatemala, nickel and bronze for the Hedjaz, and gold for Egypt, that gold being the first contract undertaken for an independent State for years. Finally, there are the Palestine issue, under the Palestine Currency Order of 1927, and the Irish coinage.

The Mint undertakes coinage for various parts of the Empire, which have their special currency, but not their own methods of providing it, and a brief reference may be made to the Empire Mints. These divide themselves into two classes, those in India and in the other Overseas Dominions. The former, dating from the days of John Company, are now two in number, those of Bombay and of Calcutta, a third at Madras having been closed in 1869. These mints do the coinage required for British India and are entirely under the control of the Viceroy and the Government of India. They must not therefore be confused with a branch mint, temporarily coining gold in Bombay in 1918 and 1919, since the Indian establishments have no connection with and do not depend upon the Royal Mint beyond the fact that this institution provides Bombay and Calcutta with certain dies when and as these are required.

There are now branch mints in three of the Overseas Dominions—Australia, Canada, and South Africa. These branches depend upon and are connected with London. The Deputy Master of the Royal Mint also controls

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the overseas institutions, and the expenses of these factories are met by annuities granted to the King by the local legislatures. These grants are administered by the Treasury, who make all appointments and regulations without interference from the overseas Governments. From the beginning all the branch mints have coined sterling gold coins, which are legal tender throughout the Empire, but until the war Ottawa alone produced its own silver. Unlike the Royal Mint, the branches are provided with refineries and make a charge for their coinage services, even in regard to gold. The Australian mints, set up to meet the gold rush, and to avoid the necessity of all bullion being brought to London, are the oldest, those of Sydney (now closed), Melbourne, and Perth having been opened in 1853, 1869, and 1897. These branches enjoy a further distinction, which has its difficulties, for whilst Melbourne and, to a lesser extent, Perth, work for the Central Government, neither of these institutions is Federal in its ownership. Sooner or later, therefore, they may have to be replaced by a Commonwealth branch, situated in Sydney, Melbourne, or Canberra. The Ottawa branch, opened in 1908 largely for the purpose of handling the metal coming from the Yukon, has always belonged to the Federal Authorities. Pretoria, obviously desirable on account of the gold mines and opened in the spring of 1923, belongs to the Union of South Africa and follows generally the model and arrangements of the Ottawa establishments.

In conclusion, it may be said that the Treasury has incurred heavy criticism by reducing the fineness of its silver and that the policy of the Mint, in accepting outside contracts, has sometimes been opposed by private traders. But in wisely adopting methods not pursued for years the Government has thereby provided work for men who would otherwise have been unemployed, and it has found a market for some of its surplus silver. In short, if the present sixpenny piece leaves a great deal to be desired and the post-war period has not been profitable, the coinage of to-day is better than that of a few years ago, and the losses incurred would inevitably have been greater under more conservative management.

The Excellence of Koo

By Geoffrey Eaton

THE captain stepped into the wheelhouse and peered at the compass. "What course you steer, eh?" he asked the large yellow face behind the wheel, illumined by the glow from the binnacle.

"Sou' sixty eas', suh," the giant Chinese boomed softly.

"South sixty east," repeated the captain. "Right! Mind you makee steer good, eh? No makee go sleep."

Rolls of fat seemed to slide upwards on the broad visage as the enormous mouth expanded in a wide grin. "Me steer plenty good, suh. Me belong plenty fine man. Velly good piecee man, me!"

Captain Briggs was smiling as he stepped over the door-combing and rejoined his officer.

"Queer fellow that, Mr. Evans!" he observed.

"Who, sir?" said the third mate. "Oh, Koo! Best quartermaster we've got, sir, for all that."

"I believe you're right," the captain agreed. "And they're all good helmsmen. A darned good job, too! If we were in narrow waters, I should feel anxious. No sight of sun nor star since we left Hong Kong, and no check on our position for thirty-six hours. We might be twenty miles off our course." He glared up at the heavy overhanging clouds which were the cause of his anxiety as if in utter resentment at his own inability to exercise the slightest control over them.

"It's beginning to clear now, though," he went on. "The moon'll be through before long. And we've got a clear hundred miles of deep sea on either side of us, and nothing for a thousand miles ahead. I'll just—Good God! Full astern, quick!"

The engine-room telegraph was rammed over, and the two stood staring, speechless with astonishment and dismay, at the long, dark shape ahead, growing momentarily clearer as the moon forged her way through flying flecks of cloud to win the open sky. The captain was the first to find his voice.

"Land, by gad!" he gasped. "Land? Where the devil has it come from? Or where the devil have we got

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to, whichever it is?" He ran to the side, and stared down at the water. "We're on, Mr. Evans—we're stuck, I believe! Bring a torch, quick!"

He directed the bright rays at the dark ripples below, and groaned. "Stuck, sure enough!" he muttered. "Thank God it's sand or mud—must be, or we'd have felt it. Hard-a-port, quartermaster! We may be able to wriggle her off, though I doubt it. Should be somewhere about low water, too—that's another blessing. But why the devil didn't that moon come out ten minutes earlier?"

In the light of the full tropic moon, the scene was now almost as clear as day. Not half a mile ahead lay a long, low, thickly-wooded island. To starboard a smaller but higher piece of land was abeam, four or five miles distant. On the port quarter two separate dark masses on the horizon definitely established the fact that the isle of their undoing was only one of a group; and that even when they had won clear of the clinging sea-floor beneath them, they had still a difficult task to negotiate before winning finally to safety.

"Go down and call the mate, Mr. Evans," ordered the captain. "Better have the second mate, too. Hard a-starboard, quartermaster!" The gigantic Koo spun the wheel over as the third mate's steps rattled down the ladder. "Dammit, what shall I do with her when I get her off, anyway? Don't know where I am, and there may be banks and shallows anywhere." He strode to and fro agitatedly.

The third mate returned to the bridge. "Mr. Evans, I'm going down to look at the chart. Sing out at once if she shows any sign of moving, and reverse the helm every three or four minutes. Hard a-port now!" and he tumbled down the ladder and into the chart-room below.

He was up again in a few minutes, leaping up the ladder at the same time as the bewildered chief officer dragged his six feet of sleepy length on to the bridge from the other side and stared about him in bemused astonishment:

"An' phwat's been afther——" he began incredulously

"Mr. Maloney," the captain broke in sharply, "there's only one place we *can* be, so far as I can make out

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from the chart, and that's over a hundred miles south of our course. Compass must be all to hell, I should say, but we'll see into that later. Hard a-starboard! Mr. Evans, get the hand-lead and take casts over bow and—hullo, what's this?"

He snatched a pair of binoculars from their box and levelled them at the dark shore ahead. Several vague shapes were slowly sliding out from the land towards the ship. As they emerged from their shadowy background the moonlight shone on long, dark hulls and triangular sails, drawing steadily and stealthily nearer.

"Prahus!" said the captain, lowering his binoculars. "Five of 'em! Crowded with men! Mr. Stewart"—to the second mate, who had joined them some minutes previously—"get all hands out *at once* and dish them out with a capstan-bar each—stewards and everybody—and stand by the side in case these devils try to come aboard. Quick now, they'll be alongside soon! And we'll get a revolver each, Mr. Maloney," hastening down to the chart-room. "I'm taking no chances."

"Shure, ye don't suppose, Cap'n——"

"I suppose you know that half the islands in these seas are pirates' nests"—the captain was hastily shoving cartridges into the chambers of a large service Colt. "And that they're not very amiable gentlemen, as a rule, when on business."

"But shure, sir," pursued the lank Maloney, "they only prey on native sailing craft. I niver heard tell of 'em attacking a steamer, bedad!"

"A steamer under way, at full speed, they can't and daren't tackle." Both were stuffing their side-pockets with cartridges. "But stuck fast as we are——" the captain's mouth set in a grim line as he stepped on deck again. "Well, we shall see!"

The sinister fleet was only a few hundred yards away now, heading directly for the ship. A babel of excited voices, wild and harsh, could now be faintly but clearly heard.

"Sound quite chatty, don't they, Mr. Maloney?" remarked Captain Briggs ironically. "Stop the engines, Mr. Evans, till this little tea-party's done with. We can't spare anybody for the bridge if there's trouble."

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Go down and get yourself a revolver and plenty of cartridges. You, too, Mr. Stewart"—to the second mate, who had just returned from forward. "Are all the men out and armed?"

"All mustered on the main deck, sir!" replied Stewart, gleefully following the third mate. "'Now could I drink hot blood,' brother Evans," he chuckled. "Gosh, I hope it's not a swizz!"

"Starboard side everybody!" shouted the captain. "Thank God they hadn't the sense to split and tackle both sides at once."

The foremost prahu was now broad on the bow, about fifty yards off, heading as if to pass the ship. All sound had ceased utterly, and the shadowy craft, followed by her four dark sisters, moved steadily on before the wind in an ominous silence.

Suddenly she wheeled sharply to starboard, and in a moment was drifting, close-hauled but with startling rapidity, in towards the ship's side, crowded, as the anxious watchers saw, with dark, crouching forms. "The after well-deck!" said the captain in a low voice. "That's where she'll touch! You stay and look out forward, Mr. Maloney." And taking with him the second mate and about half the crew, he hastened aft to await the first onset.

"No move, now," he directed in a tense voice, as the rapidly-approaching sails loomed larger and blacker, "till they attempt to board. Then—hot and strong, and stick at nothing!"

The prahu swung head to wind a bare ten yards from the ship and lay motionless, her sails flapping.

"What you want?" shouted the captain. "You go 'way—clear off—quick!"

A soft bark that might have been a laugh, a few sharp syllables in a harsh, outlandish tongue—then the long steering-oar swung over and the prahu closed in on the ship's side.

Dark brown forms leapt like cats on to the low bulwarks, with ferocious yells. Wicked-looking Malay kreeses, cruel curved knives, glinted in the moonlight. The two revolvers cracked again and again, and the Chinese crew, with answering yells, plied their capstan-

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bars valiantly. Indeed, so stoutly did the defenders acquit themselves that only one of their assailants, a gigantic lean fellow with a long kreesse, managed to gain a footing on the deck; and he, after cutting down one Chinese and taking a clean slice from the shoulder of another, was shot and clubbed simultaneously, and came crashing to the deck.

After ten minutes of fast and furious combat, the pirate prahu, baffled and sullen, shoved off from the ship's side, and, keeping well up into the wind, edged slowly away, leaving more than one writhing or motionless form to sink or swim in the dark water. The body on deck was promptly heaved overboard, and his weapon gleefully seized upon by the Chinese boatswain.

"Thank God for the spell!" panted the captain, plunging his hand into his pocket. "Re-load quickly, Mr. What's-your-name! They'll come again, sure as fate! Listen to 'em up forward."

The second mate tossed his fair curls—his cap was gone—and laughed as he obeyed. The uproar from forward, which had arisen a few moments after they themselves had been attacked, was diminishing, and it appeared that there, also, the ship's men were making good their defence.

"Now," said the captain anxiously. "Where the devil have those other prahus got to?"

They scanned the placid surface of the water keenly. Forward, a prahu was drifting out slowly from the ship, having apparently suffered a repulse at the vigorous hands of Maloney, Evans, and company. About thirty yards out, one forward and one aft, two others, evidently intended to follow up the first attack, hung, strangely hesitant, in the wind. "Now where's number five?" Stewart muttered.

The answer was instant and startling. Soft thuds on the deck behind them caused them to turn sharply, to see active, lithe bodies leaping on to the deck over the port bulwark. The last prahu of the five had not followed her comrades on the starboard side! And as Captain Briggs and his men charged across the deck to meet this new and savage onslaught, the first prahu and

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her outlying supporter both veered and set their heads for the ship.

The struggle on board was terrific in its intensity. The revolvers cracked, the capstan-bars lashed like flails, but not an inch was given on either side. Three of the crew were down, against two of the pirates. Stewart was cut down in the act of shooting his assailant, and the two fell in a heap together. The situation was desperate in the extreme, the starboard prahus were almost alongside, when, of a sudden, a thunderbolt fell, in the shape of a flying giant!

The colossal Koo landed in the midst of the battle from his flying leap off the bridge-deck, his arms whirling like the sails of a windmill. His speed and agility, considering his vast bulk, were incredible. With lightning swiftness he felled three men, one after another, with some short heavy instrument in his right hand. Re-inspired, the defenders swept their foes before them, back to the bulwark they had so successfully and guilefully scaled. Now, they hurled themselves over the side in a frenzy of fear—into the prahu, into the sea—anywhere out of the reach of that terrific warrior who had dropped, as it seemed, from the skies. In a few moments the deck was clear of living foes. Then——

"Other side!" roared the captain, and back they swept across the deck. Koo burst to the fore like an elephantine whirlwind. Two savages who had gained the deck went down with one sweep, their heads cracking together like a pistol-shot, and while Captain Briggs coolly picked off two more with his revolver, the magnificent Koo swept three clinging forms off the bulwarks as if they had been flies. Then, in a Berserker rage, he dropped his weapon, lifted the senseless forms from the deck, one in each mighty hand, and leaning over the bulwarks, hurled them with all his force into the midst of the seething mass of humanity in the prahu.

Yells of rage, astonishment, and dismay arose at the sight of this huge avenging apparition of wrath. The prahu shoved off in panic, and her helper, making in behind her, also turned her head about and held off.

Koo picked up his weapon. It was an enormous, old-fashioned revolver, which he wielded by the barrel.

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"Look out for the other side now!" cried the captain. But there was no need. Baulked, dispirited, and reduced in number, with many nursing wounds, the pirates on both sides had had enough for the time being. A babel of shrieks, shouts, and curses, however, indicated that forward the fight was far from over.

Koo was at the captain's elbow, pointing. "Ship no can makee steer, suh."

The captain gasped. "D'you mean to say you've been stuck up at that useless wheel——" His eyes followed the direction of Koo's hand.

The island, formerly ahead, now lay broad on the bow!

"Great snakes!" his face lit up with joy. "She's off—she's afloat—by gad she is! Go and help foreside, all you!" He himself sprang up the ladder and tore along the bridge-deck as he spoke. Up the bridge ladder, on to the bridge, and, "Thank God I left the engineer below!" he breathed as he rammed the engine-room telegraph "Full astern" and spun the wheel hard a-starboard.

Having jammed the helm over, he went forward and looked down from the bridge on to the fore-deck. A fierce fight was raging, but it was clear that the reinforcements from aft had turned the tide. The invaders were being steadily borne backward. In the forefront were the incomparable Koo and the lean Maloney, the latter wielding a crow-bar—he had evidently had no time to reload his revolver—with astonishing power and accuracy, and roaring out Irish oaths at the top of his voice. "Keep it up, boys!" shouted Captain Briggs. "We'll be away in a minute."

Indeed, even as he spoke the ship began to gather sternway. The pirates on board, warned by the shouts of those in the prahus, turned and flung themselves wildly over the side; and in a few minutes the ship had drawn clear and was well under way. The fight was over.

"Man to the wheel!" Koo was up in an instant. "Helm amidships now—port a little! Keep her like that for a bit. Mr. Maloney, while I'm getting her out, you'd better round up the casualties. The second mate's

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down on the after well—look him out as soon as you can. Where's the third?"

Maloney was lifting one of the prone forms from the deck. "'Tis here he is, sir," he said. "And shure I misdoubt he'll be any good at all, at all. But he's alive, bedad, anyway," and he bore him aft.

Captain Briggs, having backed his ship well clear, turned her short round. "Steady as you go!" he commanded, and looked into the compass.

"North forty west!" he said bitterly. "And the Southern Cross practically dead astern. Steer for that star!" He pointed ahead. "Compass no good! Hullo!"

A broad white bandage, which apparently sprouted profuse yellow curls, was hoisting itself on to the bridge. Beneath it, the cheerful features of Stewart seemed no whit less happy than was their usual wont.

"I'm pretty well all right, sir," he declared. "Glancing blow with the flat, I think. The third mate's got three or four cuts, but nothing serious—lost plenty of blood, though."

"What about the rest? Any killed?"

"Two, sir. At least, one's dead and the other soon will be. Both sailors. The little fat chap with the squint, and the fellow with a scar under his eye—he's still alive, but only just. The rest are mostly superficial cuts—plenty of 'em, though. A bit—er—exciting, wasn't it, sir?"

"Rather more than exciting, I should say," the captain said drily. "Well, I can't go down till we're clear of these islands. Now go down, Mr. Stewart, and send up another quartermaster. I want to talk to this fellow."

The wheel was relieved, and Koo, swelling with childlike pride in the knowledge of the heroic part he had taken in the fight, stood before the captain in the attitude of one who waits for laurels.

"Koo!" the captain addressed him sternly. "Where you catchee that revolver, eh?"

Koo immediately became embarrassed. "Levolver?" He grinned bashfully. "No savee levolver."

"You savee plenty," the captain insisted. "Revolver—that thing you makee fight with. Where you catchee?"

"I catchee Hong Kong," said Koo, wriggling un-

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comfortably. "No belong me. I takee for my brother, because in Hong Kong catchee cheap."

"H'm! Don't you know, you son of a gun—you savee no belong proper to carry firearms—all-a-same revolvers—on board British ship? You savee that?"

"Yes, suh, me savee." Koo was looking thoroughly ashamed of himself. "I makee hide."

"H'm! Well, you just about saved us from extinction with it anyway." The captain was somewhat mollified at the thought. "Where is it now?"

"No have got," said Koo.

"Makee fetchee then," said the captain.

Koo hesitated a moment, then turned and went—to the wheelhouse! He entered and, stooping down, opened the small door in the binnacle-stand, below the compass. Groping inside, his monstrous fist at length extracted the revolver—huge, old, and rusty.

"Half a ton of steel!" gasped the second mate, with pardonable exaggeration. "Half a ton of steel, by the Lord Harry, eighteen inches below the compass! And we wondered how we got here—Oh, Lord! Wonder we didn't collide with the North Pole!"

The captain stood glaring, as if petrified. ("Every second," the second mate afterwards confided to the mate, "I expected him to burst with a loud report.")

He began to mutter to himself, slowly and incredulously. "Two men dead—two officers wounded, and Heaven knows how many men—ship's bottom damaged most likely—about two days lost—"

With a great effort he regained his habitual composure. He turned again to Koo.

"And are you aware," he went on, bitterly, through his clenched teeth—"Are you aware, you great ignorant Chink, that your forefathers invented the compass, centuries before we poor Christians ever dreamed of it? Are you aware of that, you damned—great—monumental specimen of Chinese corpulence?"

Koo grinned amiably, entirely uncomprehending. Then, the memory of his recent prowess strong within him, he drew himself up majestically, and patted his broad chest.

"Me belong plenty fine man, suh!" he declared proudly. "Velly good piecee man, me!"

The Pyrenees

By V. M. Craig

THE season now approaches when folk long to go on pilgrimages; in other words, we all begin to think of holidays; and so I am about to give you some particulars of the central Pyrenees—a district which the enthusiast for nature will surely prefer to the Alps, Carpathians, Dolomites, or other sophisticated ranges. Although the peaks and passes are reasonably lofty, there is no need to be dragged about in the bight of a rope under the command of an expensive guide. A couple of walkers can go anywhere without either foolhardiness or peculiar skill. Yet to meet another man in the course of a day's tramp is an event rare enough to be almost an adventure. Chamois are a commoner sight. Eagles sail round you with hungry eyes, and soar away disappointed. Acres of flowers, iris, gladioli, alpine rose, last until early August. The very cliffs are coloured, grey, yellow, green, and red, and the upper glens are strewn with luminous little lakes.

Above all, the country is sudden, full of quick and complete changes of scene. Thus, the ascent from the Baths of Panticosa in western Aragon, after skirting two unexpected lakes, and panting up snow-patched scree, brings you to a line of vertical rock. You look back on the queer spike of the Pic d'Enfer, one side copper and the other emerald, and lose it promptly as you step through a natural doorway, not wide enough for two to pass together, and stare instead for the first time at the black and white cubes of Mont Perdu, the "lost mountain." So it is at scores of points; three paces unveil an entirely different world; with three more, the old drops out of sight.

Walking is easiest on the French slopes; the distances between villages are shorter; the paths are clearly trodden, and have even been improved by artifice. But the highest mountains are either on the watershed, which here is the frontier, or south of it and in Spain; and Spain,

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even in the outer marches, is a land of romance, in which one has definitely passed out of this northern Europe of ours. There are tiny Moorish castles, so-called at least, to recall the Mohammedan dominion. The villages look half-fortified. Their inhabitants are little used to foreigners. On their threshing floors, you will see corn being trodden out by unmuzzled oxen, in Biblical fashion, and from the sheepfolds outside, shepherds with tall crooks lead, instead of driving, the flocks to the pasture. To identify the inn, one must watch for a pine branch, hung on a pole, or nailed to the wall.

You must picture the Pyrenees as a battlemented rampart, stretched from west to east; the last peak from which the Atlantic can be seen is 8,000 feet high; the first from which the Mediterranean is visible is 10,000; the crest of the battlements between vary from the latter figure to a thousand feet higher. These are not great altitudes, but the passes are only a few hundred feet lower than the summits. The rampart rises fairly directly from the French plain, but to the south it spreads out in a honeycomb of spurs for several days' journey. These are intersected by T-shaped valleys, the cross bar of the T being a corrie or glen, which drops by precipitous falls into the stem of the T. An hour or so down the stem is a village, with an inn. The inns are clean, and the food very tolerable, especially the soups and omelets; the meat is tough, being brawny goat; it is customary, however, to eat whatever may be on tap; orders for particular dishes are received with courtesy, but make not the slightest difference to what is ultimately served. It is likewise idle to expect a meal at any but the usual hours; which are noon to one for lunch, and nine to half past for dinner. Wine can be obtained at all times; the red is the better.

For an hour or two off a village the paths, though rough, are easily seen; in one or two spots there are even roads nowadays; but further out it is necessary to scout and trail for the track. The distance between a village and that in the next parallel valley is commonly scheduled at eight or ten hours, but a man who does not know the way may take twelve or fifteen. During this journey, he will pass no habitation except, perhaps, a heap of

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stones and sods which constitutes the night quarters of a goat herd. Food must, therefore, be carried; a fair ration for a day is, for each of the party, a pound of bread, an inch length of sausage—dense, hard stuff which needs no cooking—and a quarter pound of chocolate. The two former can be bought in the inn; the last in the village shop. The country is altogether too rugged for forced marching after dark; but even apart from the compulsion of some mischance, it is a pleasant variant to spend an occasional night in the open. Plenty of wood for a fire can usually be found up to 7,000 feet, and with a good blaze one is quite comfortable. It is desirable, however, to carry a light blanket of, say, three pounds weight; and also a pint pannikin with some tablets of condensed soup to heat in it. It is not necessary to carry water or wine. Should a camp be intended or likely, double rations must of course be taken; and it may be worth noting that on French slopes, or journeys that cross over into France, where fog is more frequent and vexatious, food should always be carried in excess of the apparent need.

The obscurity of the tracks and the tangled contours of the middle heights make a map essential. The most generally useful consists of the border sheets of the map published by the French Ministry of the Interior, which overlaps into Spain. This is on the scale of 1 in 100,000, and though far from detailed south of the frontier, is broadly accurate, and is adequate, if used with care. Wherever it shows a path by a line or by dots, a recognized track exists, mostly about the position indicated, whether or not it is visible in nature. Once in a way, the track may be on the opposite side of the river, and now and again, a lake which has escaped the notice of the cartographer will pop up to confuse the traveller. A convenient precaution, in the absence of clear landmarks, is to calculate at the end of every hour the probable position reached by dead-reckoning, like a sailor.

There are, of course, a number of easy routes, short of real climbing, which are not marked on the map; this holds particularly in the regions to the east of the Maladetta where the draughtsman has left a blank desert, like the former centre of Africa. Such routes can only

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be found by diligent inquiry; goat tracks that branch off into the unknown mostly come to an annoying end on the ledges of a precipice.

A very helpful supplementary map for the west part of our area is published in Cauterets, for, although it is on a somewhat smaller scale, it actually contains details missing from the Government map, and it stretches further to the south. The Spanish military map covers the ground but is useless to a walker, and so is the French War Office map, which neither comes south of the frontier nor is legible on the northern slopes. Schrader's large-scale map of Mont Perdu is invaluable for that mountain and its immediate neighbourhood. That gives us three maps: the French 100,000 map—not the 80,000 one—the Cauterets map, and the "big Schrader."

There is no guide-book in English that is of any assistance.

As to other equipment, a mackintosh is advisable, partly for warmth in case of need, and partly for protection against thunderstorms; clothes should be warm, but light; each extra pound of weight is a serious consideration, for the slopes are steep, and often have to be faced direct, without relief by zig-zagging. Boots must be very strong, and armoured with firmly fastened nails; surprisingly few survive three day's rough marching, but cobblers can be found in the larger villages. The local rope-soled shoe is cheap, comfortable, and grips well, but is not to be recommended to any one with tender feet for more than a mile or two. On wet grass, it is dangerous and gives the wearer an immediate toss. I was once startled to find across a patch of mud in some glen the print of a motor tyre. Since we had lost our way in a mist, our emotions were precisely the opposite of Robinson Crusoe's; the portent raised great hopes; but keener scrutiny led us to discover the destiny of old tyre covers. They are now made into footgear.

A passport, of course, is required, but not special permits to cross the frontier. A camera may be carried; although the carabineros will generally protest that photography is prohibited, the civil guard agree that it is lawful. The carabineros are the men in dingy field uniform who protect the precincts of villages against

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smugglers; the majestic men in bright, tailed coats and three-cornered hats are the higher police.

Perhaps it will interest you to have a description of a typical day's walk. Let us assume that a party are tramping from Benasque to Senet by the south of the Maladetta. They start, of course, at dawn, in order to be as high up as possible before the terrible heat of noon. The mule track to the north is clear; it consists of rolling, unstable stones, and frequently forks and reunites, and even takes short cuts across the river bed. After three-quarters of an hour, one of them is struck by doubts; he forces his comrades up the scrub of the mountain side, and it is discovered that they have overshot their turning which should have been taken up a side stream. The track, already much shrunk, is recovered, and leads them up a wooded glen for another two hours, when a halt is called for the first lunch. The Maladetta glacier, now visible on the left, should make it easy to guess the position, but to make certain a search is instituted for a hut, which the map marks at the precise spot presumed to have been reached. As the hut has long since vanished, they wander on in increasing uncertainty through the thinning forest, until a memory of the morning's error persuades someone that they have passed the second fork in their route. A first attempt to escape from the glen is defeated by the mountain, not without sweat. A second, though also premature, enables them to struggle across to the lake by which the way lies. Except for an occasional strip of beaten clay, all trace of track has vanished. Long after, they climb with groans a last ridge—to find across the course a deep valley of which they had not deduced the existence. They reluctantly descend, and ascend again much more reluctantly. The way is now downhill, past a long series of lakes; these are numbered off, until the map declares that the last has been reached, and that the travellers must cross to the left bank. But perpendicular cliffs descend into the water, and make this impossible. They continue on the right bank, with misgiving, which increases, when yet another lake comes into sight below them. Unless sun and compass have gone mad, the exit from this lake is at the wrong end! Assuming that our

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tramps infer that it must be considered not to exist, and turn their backs on it, they tumble down one abrupt scarp, then another at right angles to it, and arrive on the banks of the Senet river. Unfortunately, the bridge has been washed away. If no thunderstorm has rendered the water unfordable, and too much time has not been wasted on false turns, they attain the village perhaps at sundown.

Finally, there is the question of reaching this delectable country. Between the Pass of Roncesvalles, where Charlemagne lost his army, and the Vall d'Aran, only two roads cross the frontier, and those close together; the old Roman way over the Somport, and, ten miles off, the much prettier road from Laruns which was built by Napoleon. Beside the former runs a railway to Canfranc in Spain, which was opened last year. If these are avoided, as is fit and proper, there remain a score and more of passes over even the central hills for men on foot; for the most part, not many hundred feet less high than the peaks they divide. Any of the French termini therefore will serve; but if I had to make a recommendation, I should say, "Go to Cauterets, cross the Marcadao, and try to keep just south of the watershed till you reach the Encantados—that is, enchanted or bewitched mountains—when the fine new road of the Vall d'Aran will take you back to France. But it will not all be plain sailing."

Captain Fortuna

By P. Hoole Jackson

I WAS a youth when first I came into contact with him; a youth newly flung into what we term "life" after the ordered and disciplined paths of childhood and school-days, where there is always a guiding hand of parent or master on our shoulders, however lightly it may be felt.

The Marine Office of the firm of shipowners for whom I worked was, to me, an ante-room as fraught with the elements of romance as that wherein the bumpkin D'Artagnan stammered and blushed and bravadoed as he waited the pleasure of Tréville. There were no swords and brilliant cloaks; but there were pictures of queer and fascinating ships on the walls, and blue-prints of the interior marvels of steamers to be copied and drawn; and, now and then, there would enter some man with a face the colour of the worn, ruddy desks, who would expand into talk about the wicked cities of this earth which seem to have been set in Paradises of creation with all the fiery and flashing glamour of the devil's best handiwork.

The Superintendent was tall; a Scotsman who had toiled his way up the seafaring ladder to the topmost rung, and whose oaths curdled my young blood delightfully; he was stern and relentless in matters of duty, but almost womanish-gentle to me, in my first shy years of office. Often called away, he left me to deal with the less important correspondence, and I opened the letters and reports of skippers whose business notes were intermingled with occasional interludes about some woman with golden hair and amorous eyes who desired to be remembered to "Scottie," from the remote seaports of the earth. From this jargon of business and life I extracted such matters as were considered advisable to be passed into the Board room, retaining the more intimate portions for the eyes of my chief.

One dull November morning I stood shivering on the quay of a tiny seaport, having just returned from inspecting a faulty propeller-shaft on the coasting-steamer, *Don Miguel*, and prepared a rough sketch of the flaw amidst the grease and stench behind the engine-room. The skipper had departed with a flea and a mouthful of Scottish vituperation in his ear to seek a less exacting post, and the *Don Miguel* lay weltering in a rolling swell, like a wraith in the mist.

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I turned into the inevitable Ship Inn and ordered a meal and some hot tea. "With a touch of rum in it, dearie," as the stout landlady suggested. "You're looking so starved." I did not admit that it would be my first taste of intoxicating liquor, and felt rather exalted as I sat alone at the little table.

Just as I had finished, the door opened and a little man sidled in; his clothes were worn and the blue coat a trifle greasy, but his face and beard were spruce, and there was power indicated in the lean, capable hands; a pair of the bluest eyes I ever gazed into smiled at me. "Mister Caldas?" he asked.

"Captain Fortuna," he introduced himself, hanging up his battered sea-cap. "Out of a berth, wife and five kids don't like it . . . the *Don Miguel* wants a skipper. What about it, youngster? . . . here's my papers"; and he drew a bundle from his coat.

"I'm afraid . . ." I began.

"Oh, I know you're not the skipper," he put in. "But have a heart . . . look at these," and he fished out a much faded photograph of a plump little woman with the usual cheap photographer's grouping of the family.

"Why did you lose your last ship?" I asked, trying to be businesslike.

"Had a row with the owner," he said simply. "Utter cad . . . private voyage . . . all my other papers O.K., you wire your chief that you've found a skipper. I'll not let you down . . . wait . . . there's time, I'll tell you the yarn; let's have a drink."

The sea fog thickened outside; the tiny gas-jet in the room sent out a sickly glimmer which flickered in a yellow pool on the cheap oilcloth and merged with the shadows in the corner. The hooting of sirens blew to us with all the pathos of lost spirits, wailing in the smoke of the pit of hell; now and then a voice drifted to us from the general-bar . . . "A peach she was, an' me an' Bert . . ."

Fortuna laughed, "Always a woman," he said. "Always *that*, boy; keep clear of their rakish hulls if you can . . . and yet . . ."

His eyes held a far-away look, and he sipped his whiskey silently for a minute or so.

"You've not been to sea, lad," he began. "More's the pity, but you'll go; no lad that starts life amongst

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ships stays ashore. What's life ashore . . . morning newspaper, rush for the train, squirming at a desk, back home again, listening to your wife telling you about the Joneses down the street going one better in window-curtains . . . bah ! ”

He shifted his short legs and stretched them out more comfortably. “ I took over the *Firefly* in Liverpool; owner coming aboard at Queenstown. Trim little steamer, half yacht. No details given me except to obey orders. Good enough for me ; the pay was good too, and the missis was pleased. Rotherham came aboard, two others with him. Downy-looking crowd, I thought, but well dressed, too fat in the chops for my liking, though. No bad sailors either, for we ran into bad weather in the Bay, and they didn't change their life . . . plenty of liquor, cards, and the food was as good as you'd get on a P. & O. boat. Thinks I, ‘ Here's a soft billet for you, Fortuna, if you don't worry about other folk's affairs.’

“ Soft it was, and nothing to show we weren't on a pleasure cruise. Put in at Malta ; they did me well in the best hotel in Valetta ; three days we stayed there ; fairly taking things easy. Same at Port Said. It wasn't until we were down the Bay of Bengal that we hit dirty weather ; glass tumbling down, copper-yellow sunset, sea like an oil-tank. Nothing in that, I'd seen worse ; but there's nothing like a nasty spell of weather for showing a man's temper.”

Fortuna paused ; outside a newsboy was calling the afternoon racing edition ; the mist was thicker ; across the road we could see a woman titivating her hair before a mirror in a dingy room with the gaslight shining on her white arms and shoulders ; a passing sailor hailed her jokingly and she waved a well-formed arm at him. The noise in the bar was louder. “ Tried to screw another ten piastres out of me, blowed if she didn't.”

Fortuna jerked a derisive thumb towards the bar. “ Half of 'em fairy-tales,” he said. “ But what can you expect ? they're at sea two-thirds of their lives . . . and the sea's woman incarnate . . . I tell you . . . Well, Rotherham, that was the chief, sat drinking alone while the other two were in their bunks ; his face was yellow but he kept on at the whiskey. That made me think he wasn't a yachtsman. I did a bit of quiet thinking between spells, aye, and on the bridge, too. I liked that

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boat, she took the rough weather like a seagull, and I drove her through it. Pretty well cleaned the land softness out of me, that spell; salted my beard, as we say.

"We touched at Bangkok, and after that we began to nose amongst the islands. One night, Rotherham came up with Landron, a little, ugly chap with greasy cheeks. "We'll take over now, captain," he says. I was taken unawares. "What!" I said, "With heaven knows how many shoals and reefs about?"

"You're paid well, captain," answered Rotherham, with a touch of a sneer in his voice. "You've got us here. We know this bit. Go below. We'll call you for the morning watch."

"I didn't like it much. But I'd no choice. So I went to my cabin and looked up the chart again. There were three islands near us, and I guessed that our business was on one of those. Or it might be the mainland. I don't know. But one thing I did; I put my revolver in my jacket pocket.

"They called me just after dawn, and it wasn't until they came for me that I saw the key of my cabin was missing. I heard them turn it in the lock. They came in with a chart which showed a portion of land and a river. A good chart, shoals marked, everything.

"They told me what they wanted . . . to navigate this and anchor off a little creek. I went on deck, and I noticed that they weren't going to let me be alone. Their right-hand pockets looked weighted, too. The sun was just coming up, and I saw that we were hove-to just off the land and the river mouth. There was a big shoal just clear of the land, and I had my hands full working the *Firefly* round it. But that chart was dead right. You won't know what that means . . . it means that the chart had been made less than ten years ago. Those river shoals alter quickly. Well, that wasn't strange except for one thing. The chart was dated 1798, and Rotherham had told me it was old treasure we were after.

"All right," I thought. "Fortuna has his weather eye open after this." We reached our anchorage all right; ticklish work in that bit of a river, but I'd been on river work before, as they knew. Queer how those streams catch hold of your fancy; smooth surface, barely a ripple, and the dank sniff of decaying vegetation; the high-water mark on the shrubs and trees, like a brown line, and

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the shrieks of forest-birds as they fly, screaming, away. Hot! It was like working in an engine-room. We had the awnings up, but stifled under 'em.

"Rotherham and Landron took the launch and three of the lascars and went off. That left Catling and myself. I'd been watching Catling; he seemed decent, about thirty-three I should have put him at, and clean built. When they'd gone, he came out of his bunk and asked to speak to me.

"Well," I asked him. "What is it? robbery with violence, or just robbery. It's one of the two."

"I don't know, skipper," he said. "But I don't like it. I'm shares in on this, and it's supposed to be Spanish treasure; but I don't like the way those two are acting."

"Got a gun?" I said. "Yes . . . well then, there's two to two, if it comes to cussedness."

"There's the lascars," he said, "and the engineers; they're all in it."

"The deuce they are!" I said, thinking we were in a pretty pickle. "All right, let things go on. Time enough to alter when we know what we're on. If it's only niggers, it's no great weight. I've seen a few things like that and they're common here . . . but there's no need for all this mystery if that's all."

"The launch came back and Rotherham told us to get our traps and come along. The engineers . . . two of them . . . came as well. They were all armed, and all nervous; I could tell that by the way they fingered their gun pockets.

"Two miles upstream it petered out into a thin ribbon of water, and we came to a bamboo landing-stage with a clearing behind. There was a house there, pretty enough, but with something sinister about it. Hanged if I know why a house smothered in flowering creepers should look anything but picturesque, but this did. A man came out on to the stoep. Tall, bearded, heavily built, but with a drunkard's eyes and trembling hands. Half Spanish, I fancy. He greeted us politely and invited us in. Rotherham was all smiles. We went into the big room which ran along the front of the house, and glad to get there, for it was deuced hot. But we didn't think much of the room when we saw the woman. She took your breath away. Native blood in her, I thought, though she may have been mixed with other white blood, you can't

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tell. Perhaps the grandparents had been Spaniard and Italian woman; but the difference showed most in the father. She was graceful in the way native women are, walked in a fashion you never see women do over here, and in a manner most men would be scared of promenading with on the streets . . . you know what I mean. Soft, swaying, gentle and easy as a cat. But she was beautiful. Rotherham never had his eyes off her, nor Catling.

"We were to play slow; that was obvious. We were there a week, and might have been on a picnic, but I noticed that Catling and Rotherham were getting across each other about the woman. One night I was just settling down to sleep, with a chair nice and handy against the door, when I heard a low "hist." I sat up with my gun in my hand. Falaria . . . the girl came in, with her finger to her lips and glided to the bed. "John has sent me to tell you they're going to try for the treasure to-night," she whispered. "John?" I whispered, "oh, Catling."

"Yes." Soft drawn and caressing, that 'yes.' She'd nearly driven young Catling crazy by going off with Rotherham in one of the canoes that morning, but she'd got what she wanted. She whispered a few words to me and I nodded. Then she glided out. It was nearly midnight when I heard the soft, low whistle I was waiting for. Their signal. I was up and out of the room in a second. Catling and the señor and myself, with two native servants and Falaria . . . and against us the lascars, two half-white engineers, with Rotherham in hiding somewhere, and Landron knowing the house like a book. They'd a machine-gun, we knew, and the odds looked dirty.

"It wasn't much of a fight," continued Fortuna softly. "They used the gun too soon, and the fools tried to rush us in moonlight. I think they thought that all was pretty clear. Landron and the engineers were our mark, and we got them. The lascars were on our side after that.

"You see that whistle was to be Rotherham's signal; but it wasn't Rotherham who gave it, it was Falaria. Rotherham was dead in her room, a neat knife-slit through his ribs. The rest was easy going. We buried them beyond the clearing, and I read the service over them, right and proper. The old señor had a son . . .

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Falaria's brother . . . who went to the bad. He knew the old man had struck some Spanish treasure, and he badly wanted a share, a big share. But the señor had other views, he wanted it for Falaria. Why didn't he go home? . . . couldn't. He'd got across with some secret society, and Falaria wouldn't leave him. The son ran across Rotherham in a drink-shop in Singapore. Where they'd got rid of him, I don't know. But they had the chart. They'd been bluffed, though. The treasure wasn't worth more than a hundred thousand; not worth the yacht and the wages, and all that upset . . . and half a dozen shares. I fancy they thought it was about a million. . . ."

A soft breeze rattled the door of the Ship Inn; the mist outside swirled into queer shapes; a star blinked out and disappeared. The lapping of the water against the jetty told us that it was high water.

"Catling . . . yes, he married her. I left them there; happy as you please. But I'd sooner have married a sting-adder. Give me the quiet sort with a leaning for kids . . . that knife wound was too neat a job for my liking . . . But beautiful . . . the kind of woman you dream of."

Our evening meal came in, and the landlady stirred the fire into a blaze. The shadows danced on the walls, and even the miserable gas-jet seemed brighter. Fortuna was speaking: "Glad if you could put a word in, youngster . . . oh, yes, I brought the *Firefly* home, and a rare racket there was; they had only paid half the fee for her before sailing."

Two years later I met him again, as I leaned over the low rail of the *Don Miguel* and watched the British fleet bombarding Cape Helles. I was tired, drowsy, and the sound of his voice, as he made his way through the khaki crowd that thronged the deck, was like something heard in dreams . . .

"Fortuna!" I said.

He knew me. "Come and have a drink, sonny," he said. "This is some show. I'm glad I lived to see it."

Down in the little cabin I lifted my glass to his, and we toasted an oath that was more common then than now . . . "The old Country." "I wish they'd let me go ashore," he sighed. "But they won't. I'm only a merchant skipper . . . but I'm seeing life . . . What! That yarn . . . I remember. I was coasting there a few

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months back. They're married; Catling's as happy as a king; and there's two kids running loose in that clearing. Merry as young natives. Come home? They don't want to. One of those kids has yellow hair and fair cheeks . . . like Catling . . . the other is as dark as the mother. She fondles them just like my missis . . . you can't tell with women. I'll bet she's forgotten all about that knife."

The dull booming of the naval guns blew across to us, sounding below like distant drums. The scream of a shell and a loud hiss as it struck the water roused us. "Time, gentlemen, please!" said Fortuna. "Up on deck, son; we're getting close. So long."

He shook hands and climbed up to the bridge; the engine bells began to talk quickly. Up there his little figure looked almost imposing; the shrapnel that burst over us he scarcely heeded; his job was the ship. As coolly as he must have nosed up that river he edged in towards the shore where the lighters waited. As we cleared away from the *Don Miguel*, he waved his hand, though he could not distinguish me in the huddled mob of figures on the lighter.

In my greatcoat pocket were two cases of cigarettes and a small bottle. "You did me a good turn once, sonny . . . I've not forgotten . . . neither has the missis . . . seven we've got now . . ." He had drawn from his pocket another faded photograph of the same group . . . or so it seemed, until I saw that there were two more tiny figures on it, and that the woman looked older . . . but happy, you could read that even on the vile print. A star shell burst over the yellow cliffs of Gallipoli, a roar of shells went over us as a warship fired a salvo. Yet, how incongruous! My thoughts were not on that shore where anything might wait us, but on an oily river, and the superb figure of a woman whom Fortuna had painted into my mind as though I had seen her graceful limbs moving beneath the light clothing of the East; and of a man lying with staring eyes and a slit in his breast, his last thought that of thwarted passion, and probably a curse in his heart for the fool he had been.

“Says Sergeant Murphy”

By A. P. Garland

THE DECLINE OF THE CLUB

“HEDDLE,” said Sergeant Murphy, “you’ve heard of community singin’, and, if you were unlucky, you heard the thing itself. Have you ever heard of community soocide?”

“No,” said Heddle. “What is it?”

“Well,” answered the Sergeant, “anny day now if you’re crossin’ Hyde Park, you may see a bunch of well-dhressed men, with toppers and white spats divin’ simultaneously into the deepest part of the Serpentine and refusin’ to come up agen. They’ll be the Ould Guard of West End clubmen.”

“Why, what’s the matter?” asked Heddle.

“It’s this,” said the Sergeant. “West End clubs that were wanst the glory of the counthry have gone to the divil. There was a time when as soon as the docthor declared it was a fine boy, weighin’ ten pounds, the father enthered him sthraight away for the Mulligatawny Club. Even then the family three had to have no less than fourteen quarthern on it before the committee would look at the application form. And ould divils, with wan foot in the grave, would hobble down on crutches to blackball a fellah whose only fault was that his father had wanst ridden over hounds at a hunt.

“Nowadays the vogue of the swell club is departed, the membership is dwindlein’ steadily and many secretaries are wondherin’ would it be infra dig to go out and dhrag men down off buses and force them to join.”

“What’s the cause of all this?” asked Heddle. “Too expensive nowadays, perhaps.”

“Some say that’s the reason,” said the Sergeant.

“But I’ll not believe it. There’s never a shortage of money for luxuries, and as long as the West End club was a luxury, you couldn’t keep applicants for membership away with a machine gun. No, what’s killin’ them clubs, in my opinion, is women. There’s the thrail of Eve across the destruction that’s makin’ St. James’s Sthreet a home for the jackal.

“Woman, Heddle, has always had a stone up her sleeve for a man’s club. It was wan of the few places in the world she was barred from. She might cause a panic when she went ridin’ in Rotten Row, but as soon

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as she called at a club in Pall Mall she was made to stand at the porther's lodge, like a fellah collectin' for the dustmen's beano. Worse than that, a woman was never able to find out if her financé or her husband was or was not in a club. The servants were thrained to stall off the female menace.

"So when the Female Revolution came on, and Eve got votes, latchkeys, pyjamas, and anny other he-privileges she took a fancy to, she made up her mind to desthroy men's clubs. She started modestly enough. She asked for a waitin' room where she could be parked while her hubby was sayin' good-bye to his friends and ordherin' wan for the road. Next she deludhered committees into providin' a luncheon room for mixed couples, and here she was able to insult the catherin' and to point out that a woman's hand was needed to put things right.

"Then she threw off the mask.

"'Whither thou goest I go,' says she, 'or I'll know the bloomin' reason why. Of two things wan. Either I become a member on a fifty-fifty basis, or else you cut out clubs altogether!'

"Now there couldn't be annything more horrible, Heddle, than a decent man's club invaded be a horde of females. Think of it! The fellah in the smoke-room that wanted to tell the latest story from the Stock Exchange would find he wasn't at his best before a mixed awjence.

"The man with the hand-fed torso, who used to comfort himself be swallowin' a dock glass of port afther lunch and then lyin' back for a snooze in a big armchair, would find himself dhragged out to dance the Jermyn Sthreet Blues. There'd be a reek of French perfume everywhere, pink garthers would be sthrapped round the legs of the billiard tables, and jazz music dhrawn from senile pianos that hadn't been opened since Diamond Jubilee year.

"Fancy them goin's-on undherneath the pictures of the foundhers of the club—stern, old men, all frowns and whiskers, that be rights ought to be wearin' antlers.

"So rather than face such a sacrilege, men are dhriftin' steadily from their clubs and becomin' domesticated and terribly miserable.

"As usual, the last word's with the women."

Dramatist, What of Life ?

By Horace Shipp

Down our Street. By Ernest George. (Vaudeville Theatre).

The Light Comedian. By Hermon Ould. (R.A.D.A. Theatre.)

Debonair. By G. B. Stern and Frank Vosper. (Lyric Theatre.)

Our Ostriches. By Marie C. Stopes. (Royalty Theatre.)

"TINKER, tailor, soldier, sailor; rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief": the social comedy of our current stage sets itself the task of showing them each and all in their habits as they live. Usually the thieves and the rich men have rather more than their fair share of attention; perhaps, because theatre-going is the pastime of the respectable classes who, being neither rich nor criminal, choose this vicarious freedom from their normal restraints. More serious dramatists, feeling that stolen necklaces and five figure incomes are so far removed from normal existence as to make them unworthy of discussion, tend to turn to other types and classes for their material; and whenever a playwright does get his studies this much nearer to the heart of life, the chances are that the work will have a quality of reality which will set it apart from the usual run of West End stage stuff.

Mr. Ernest George in *Down our Street* has gone all out for the crude life of the poor. He claims to know that life at first hand, and although now he lives in the comparative opulence and refinement of keeping a bookshop at Clapton, his biography, according to the popular press, has all the romantic glamour of his work. *Down our Street*, because of the brightness of much of the dialogue, because of flashes of character, most of all because of the superb acting of Nancy Price, is an extremely interesting play. That it is a picture of life in the stratum of society which Mr. George pretends I steadfastly deny. I almost suspect him of being one of those dreadful sociologically-minded people who go off to live in the East End for the sake of studying the poor in their native haunts. It is true that poor folk are full of wit and real wisdom, streaked across by amazing foolishness as he has made them, but he has terribly overdone the violence of their lives. I have a profound suspicion that extreme poverty

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in these days has no purple patches—not even under the eye. When Mr. George makes almost everybody quarrel and quarrel continually, threatening violence at any provocation, one doubts his knowledge. The other grave fault is one which strikes at the whole plot of the play, for there is no adequate reason why Belle, the heroine, should go away from her home for three weeks without warning or explanation; and if her creator had not made her do this, there would have been no play.

Looking back upon *Down our Street*, one realizes that Nancy Price and Morris Harvey in their finished character studies made the play. Nor should Milton Rosmer's convincing study of a street bookmaker's tout be forgotten. The rest of the cast did well, but despite occasional first-rate lines, Mr. George had not created real people.

The presence of this play of Cockney life in the Vaudeville theatre carries one back to the production of another realistic play of London poverty which was presented there in 1913, I believe. The play then was Mr. Hermon Ould's Cockney tragedy, *Between Sunset and Dawn*; and its almost Strindbergian grimness and real humour, the work of a man still in his early twenties, were hailed with hope. The presentation of a greater tragedy on a wider stage over the next four years overshadowed this promising debut, and by the time the stage had settled down to its post-war self, Mr. Ould had arrived at a period of dramatic experimentalism which put his work somewhat outside its policy of safety first. The result is that, although his work gets presented in the State theatres of the continent and the repertory theatres both of England and America, although one of his plays recently had a long run in Paris, the West End of London knows him not, or dubs him "highbrow" in final damnation.

The presentation of *The Light Comedian* proves how well he can write a straight comedy. Bohemian life in the milieu of a touring company and subsequently in the London rooms of Simon, the successful light comedian, is its background; our common human nature in love and conflicting loyalty its theme. Mr. Ould has written an exceedingly charming play; and this production of it

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by Muriel Pratt, with first-rate performances by Reginald Gardiner, Ursula Jeans and Violet Farebrother, to name but three of the cast, calls for presentation in the West End.

Does *Debonair* also throw light on our basic humanity? Its type are much more the norm of stage folk, much of it taking place in villas on the Riviera, that Cloud-Cuckoo-Land of the theatre. Its value lies in the study of one post-war young woman, living the desperate life of freedom of her tribe, taking terrific risks with her chastity in order to racket around dance-rooms and night-clubs. It is probably true as a revelation of that type of mind and living. For some of us it seems amazingly dishonest and cynical, but that is only the confession that our morals are pre-war, and that we do not understand a generation hungry for adventure and without the means to pay for it. *Debonair* suffers badly as a play in that it is the dramatization of Miss Stern's novel, and that nothing could compress its episodic form into stage shape. At the end it simply falls to pieces; but in the meantime it has shown us an interesting study of the maddening, amoral young contemporary female of the species—a part extremely well played by Celia Johnson.

Miss Marie Stopes's play does not really set out to study human character. Its business from first to last is to convince us that Birth Control is a social necessity and its neglect a vile social crime. Unfortunately the dramatic form demands more than a strong conviction, and one is forced to admit that she has not the slightest idea of how her fellow humans act, look, speak, or even breed. Her poor people in a slum tenement were incredibly badly drawn; and her rich people in the park weren't drawn at all. She had a Commission in one long act which came a little nearer humanity—particularly a Bishop, played by Kinsey Peile—but we were forced to conclude that she had spent so much time on committees that she had never met either a poor person or a rich one in a human way. Miss Stopes may be a good sociologist, but she is a shockingly bad dramatist; and her play will convince more people of the need to control the birth of unworthy plays than that of babies.

Books

TWO ENGLISH POETS

T. E. BROWN. A Memorial Volume, 1830-1930. Cambridge University Press. 10s.

CENTENARIES are apt to be full of fictitious and temporary enthusiasm, and, when they are dated from a man's birth, they may deal with a writer who is already an acknowledged classic, or one suffering from the reaction which follows excessive praise, or again one who since his death has never attained due recognition. It all depends on how long the writer lived, how soon he began to write, how far he scorned the spirit of the age, and, lastly, how far the revelation of his personality can enhance or reduce the prestige of his writing.

We may say at once that we are very glad to see this volume, because Brown has never yet had the repute he deserves, and because he was what authors should be, an admirably vivid man. The memoir by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch shows the trials he had to go through at Christ Church as a poor servitor who could not receive the honours due to him from his college after a double First. Oriel was wiser, choosing him as a Fellow, and his long service later as a schoolmaster is generally known. He did his work well, being an inspiring teacher, but it is clear from his poem "Clifton," in which he turns from scholastic precisians towards the salt winds and ling-clad mountains of his beloved island, how deeply he felt the deadening round. No wonder Percival, the dry and austere, found him "volcanic"; you never knew what he was going to say next, what odd and daring light he would throw on the puzzles and absurdities of life, and particularly on that phase of it offered by a great Public School. The deepest feeling for humanity, even down to its despised half-wits; the recognition of laughter as God-like; the quaint humour of the angels taking sandwiches and sherry in the middle of the masterly questionings of "Homo Loquitur"; the irregular rhythms of lyrics half solemn and half touched with the vernacular—these things were the essential Brown, happily different from other poets, and so familiar, even with his singing robes about him, that he might well appeal to every man. A passionate lover of Nature, too, he had his roots in Mother Earth, the oldest of divinities. We have heard enough of the "born sobber" and the *advocatus diaboli* whom 'Q' answers in the 'Memoir'; Brown as a great poet *sui generis* will be universally known some day.

The present tributes, published on behalf of the Isle of Man Centenary Committee, pay homage to him mainly as a Manxman, and the 'Fo'c's'le Yarns,' well read, pass easily beyond the narrow successes of dialect poems. They won a reputation with the

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judicious more than a generation ago, in spite of their loose and repetitive manner. But other work of Brown's is greater and more easily accessible to everybody, the free flowering of that spirit which felt so deeply and saw so much. What schoolmaster ever wrote such poetry? What scholar ever mastered his shyness to speak out so poignantly?

He wrote lyrics later than most men, as 'Q' points out; he might have written many more in early days, if his life had been less hampered; but the vintage at least is sound and mature, not an affair of the lovely words and facile emotions in which youth rejoices. He grew old without indulging in Arnold's elegiac melancholy; he was never "immured in the hot prison of the present"; he had an unshakable faith in the Divine. V.B.

MILTON. By E. M. W. TILLYARD. Chatto and Windus. 15s.

THIS elaborate and well-documented book shows a comprehensive knowledge of recent study of Milton, but is less concerned with questions of style and poetry in detail than with the thought and intention that lie behind Milton's work. Mr. Tillyard writes mainly for the special student, and he has done good service by paying close attention to the Latin poems and the prose writings, both often ignored by critics but essential for the full understanding of Milton's aims. He is so steeped in the subject that he is a firm defender throughout of a career which was marked, indeed, by high seriousness and great poetry, but which does not leave a pleasant impression of Milton's personality. The Puritans held a Turkish view of the subjection of women, as might be gathered from 'Paradise Lost,' and though we know little of Milton's intercourse with his wives, they can hardly have held an agreeable position. Mr. Tillyard considers judiciously Milton's attitude to chastity and sex problems.

So far as poetry is concerned, Milton might have proved a *Gradus ad Parnassum*, but English moved away from his concise classicism, and Keats, who wrote notes on 'Paradise Lost,' was the only first-rate poet of aftertimes who turned deliberately Miltonic for a while. For the average lover of poetry to-day the early poems are more attractive than the later and longer pieces. Mr. Tillyard, however, does not consider Milton as an artist in language so much as a reformer and theologian and an optimist who thought to make people better by scolding. From his early years he had assurance and arrogance, not finding men equal to him, and these qualities appear in the Latin poems. They have beautiful touches, but when Mr. Tillyard credits them with "a very rigorous sense of form," we remark that they have false quantities a modern scholar would avoid. Putting these Latin poems and the Prolusions by the side of familiar English pieces,

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he works out a careful scheme of Milton's moods and development. He shows that the ideas of the 'Paradise within' as the chief reward and of the virtue of high action (which to Milton meant high literature) came early to the self-devoted scholar. At Horton, Milton worked hard, and it is notable that 'L'Allegro' shows the spectator and observer rather than the enjoyer. We cannot suppose he made much of the "sunshine holiday," though he repeated the phrase later. 'Lycidas' is mainly about its author, in spite of its ostensible purpose, and it is Milton's own views and covert meanings that Mr. Tillyard seeks to discover. They are always there; Milton is an egoist who, unlike Shakespeare, must protrude himself; but his inconsistencies and changes of attitude make his mind difficult to follow. In 'Paradise Lost,' it is urged, everything was meant to be subordinated to the human drama and the Satanists are misguided, though they may contend that Satan gets the finest poetry. Eve is full of mental triviality. Milton can never forgive a woman anything, and his prejudices make Dalila ridiculous when she talks of "common female faults" in 'Samson.' In that play Milton was truer to classical models than some commentators have supposed. The figure of Heracles, the heroic exemplar of physical strength among the Greeks, supplies a parallel in Greek drama which has not occurred to Mr. Tillyard, but the adornments promised for Samson's tomb seem to be neither Greek nor Hebrew.

Some of the prose is fine in its stately length, but again much of it is dreary and rude, if not ferocious. Milton had a singularly wide conception of education and his main doctrines may not be out of date to-day, but few, we fear, will go to him for help. He would always be moving among grave and superior persons; he lacked humour and the common touch. Still, we are grateful to Mr. Tillyard for explaining him so well.

HISTORY IN LARGE AND IN LITTLE.

A CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE MODERN AGE FROM THE BLACK DEATH TO THE WORLD WAR. By EGON FRIEDEL. Translated by C. F. ATKINSON. Vol. I., Renaissance and Reformation. Knopf. 21s.

THE author in his clever Introduction explains that "exaggeration is the implement of every artist, and therefore of the historian. History is a great convex mirror in which the features of the past stand out all the more expressively and distinctly for being enlarged and distorted." Agreeing that cultural history must be fragmentary, he regards it as endless in scope, including any manifestation of humanity. We certainly think that the claims of history to be scientific are overrated, and the author's way of concentrating on leading movements illustrated by

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leading men allows of much brilliant writing. His knowledge of all kinds of sources, many of which he has read as a foreigner, is impressive, and his generalizations always make effective reading, though some of them appear to approach paradox. He pays judicious tributes to his predecessors, particularly Burckhardt, and makes some very sensible remarks on plagiarism. He describes the Middle Ages as the age of puberty for mid-European humanity with all the strange symptoms of adolescence. People then were children in many ways with beliefs alien to ordinary actuality, taking the world as a God-inspired mystery but changing gradually to a man-made rationality. The Black Death is regarded as only one side of a general sickness in European humanity, almost as if every age makes its own illnesses, an idea that seems to owe something to Nietzsche's "Beyond Good and Evil." With the Plague went widespread mental disorder, and profound pessimism. Two mad kings reigned almost simultaneously and immorality was shown in the styles of dress. Rudolph of Habsburg is exhibited as "the first great Philistine of modern history," a business man and a dynastic profiteer. He is contrasted with Frederick II, the nihilist who understood everything only to despise it. These portraits of great men show

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the author at his best. The reasons for the decay of Raphael's reputation are well put, and Luther stands before us with all his faults and virtues. The great renovator was not Erasmus, the broader and bolder thinker, but the narrow peasant's son who did things, which is more than thinking or writing them. "His Pope was the Bible, which was to him literally true, word for word, without the slightest modification or limitation." The Reformation signifies in one of the author's bold generalizations the attempt to secularize the thought and faith of mankind, and he points out the assumptions that have been, and still are, made without adequate grounds out of the words of Christ. Besides estimates of Philip II and Queen Elizabeth we find Montaigne, Bacon, Shakespeare and Giordano Bruno, possibly Shakespeare's teacher in free thought, all appreciated. For Bacon's "wisdom is power" read "knowledge." Perhaps the original German was *Wissen* or *Wissenschaft*. We do not know what proof there is of the innuendo against Queen Elizabeth. She is regarded as an example of national characteristics. For we have, according to the author, a way of

feeling everything to be true and good which brings immediate practical advantage. When an Englishman feels anything for any reason to be unpleasant, he concludes—in his subconsciousness—to call it wrong or untrue.

The comment is shrewd, like many of the author's analyses. His work reads well in translation but it is odd to find in the little Greek quoted an "s" made into a "d" in the most familiar of words.

MARY GLADSTONE (MRS. DREW) : HER DIARIES AND LETTERS. Edited by LUCY MASTERMAN. With 39 illustrations. Methuen. 21s.

DOMINANT clans, like that of the Gladstones and Lytteltons, make a great impression on the public and secure for their members a distinction other people find less easy to attain. The editor tells us that Mary Gladstone had prepared a series of volumes of extracts for publication which were disregarded because much of the raciness had been taken out of them. Even so, the narrative from 1870 to 1886 might have been considerably reduced with advantage. The diarist was late in finding herself, as is admitted, and a good many of her records of happy occasions have no particular point about them now. She was hardly witty enough to be compared to women who held *salons* in Paris, though she had a large share of generosity and affection. She would, however, nowadays be regarded as an advanced sentimentalist. Lord Acton, the historian, took her in hand, and it is clear that she owed much to him, as her reading and knowledge were largely haphazard. "Mr. G.," as his Cabinet used to call him, forced

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on her Butler's "Analogy," without producing any noteworthy result, but she loved his politics and was busy denigrating Dizzy. The large united families show an admirable solidarity, and we are introduced to their special dialect, "Glynnese." Some of the comments are acute enough, as where Stanford is described as "overpowering," and Watts's portrait of Gladstone as a failure. His writings, however, and his descendants have made no great mark on the world.

The chief interest of the Diary for us lies in the accounts of people who are not entirely political or not in politics at all. It is tantalizing to read that Bishop Wilberforce told true ghost stories, and get none of them. The accounts of Browning and Tennyson are striking. Browning talked too much, and had disagreeable manners. Tennyson is "exactly like Shakespeare to look at" in 1876, and proved rather an alarming host with his gruff, amorous manners. We can imagine the long, dreary talk with Carlyle. The Balfours and Sidgwicks were centres of cultivated amusement, and A. J. B., "King Arthur," executed classic music on the concertina! Among many handsome persons George, Lord Pembroke at twenty, six foot five, with most beautiful eyes, seems to have made the greatest impression. The prim ways of the past will strike many inoderns as amusing, but how comes it that Mrs. Masterman has neglected to provide an index for a volume of 492 pages crammed with details of well-known people? If the book is more than trivial, this is a serious omission, and we think some of it is of notable quality.

FICTION.

ROGUE HERRIES. By HUGH WALPOLE. Macmillan. 10s. 6d.

GREAT pains have been taken to recover, in this novel, the atmosphere and manners of the English lake-district in the years preceding and following the Jacobite occupation of Carlisle in 1745. At that time Charles Edward exhibited, the author tells us, "the magnificent carriage of his beautifully shaped head, the carriage by natural right divine of a king and a ruler of men," and the phrase serves to illustrate the artificiality which damages many richly-coloured scenes.

Francis Herries, the locally detested "rogue," is a powerfully presented, but unpleasant creation. His evidences of culture, and his occasional lapses into kindly conduct, do not atone for his moral cruelty to his first wife, nor for his odious way of talking indecency to his son, from the boy's childhood onwards. No doubt the eighteenth century was "a frank age," but it was scarcely necessary to make "naked" a prevalent adjective, applied alike to men, women, roads, and soil, among other objects.

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When we even find the rain "whispering indecent and chuckling secrets" as it patters on the window, the suggestion of "period" impropriety seems overdone.

The imagery of the novel is remarkable, and, especially in the pictures of lakeland scenery in calm and storm, often highly effective and beautiful. Many readers will enjoy the book even more for its settings than for its actors. Occasionally, as has already been suggested, the choice of adjectives, that constant exertion of so many novelists, is queer. We hear of "idiotic moonlight" wavering feebly at the window, and of a girl with "red smoke-gleaming hair." This Mirabell, one of two flame-headed women who influence the life of Francis, is the most original character in the book, and will long be remembered by those who meet her there. When, on the last page, she dies, after being delivered of a son, and the "rogue" father himself dies with her, we may think that the ending of a novel with an accouchement has in this instance been entirely right.

STORM OVER EUROPE. By DOUGLAS JERROLD. Benn. 8s. 6d.

IN this story Mr. Jerrold uses his pungent and derisive pen to show up demagogic rule in theory and practice and support the better ways of tradition. The state concerned is the little Kingdom of Cisalpania, but it is clear that the moral is applicable nearer home. One of the political humbugs, who looks forward to an imaginary world desirable only in his own eloquent periods, has an evident prototype. The political issue is plain. The Republicans stand for a new morality, internationalism, secularity and untrammelled liberty of speech and behaviour. The Royalists stand for authority, institutional religion and a severe intellectual discipline. The Republicans are in power: can the Royalists, who have played a waiting game for years, turn them out and establish a regime likely to be permanent? The last King was ejected as undesirable, and his sister, a moribund drunkard in Paris, is little better. But D'Alvarez, the leader of the Royalists, is clever enough to find a new Queen and engineer a successful revolution by force of arms. It would not be fair to detail the ironies of the situation; it is enough to say that the story in itself is a good one, ingeniously arranged.

The reader will require all his wits to enjoy the implications and subtle half-reticences of the talkers and the incisive epigrams on the hollow pretensions of democracy. Politicians, of course, must dodge and palter with words, but Mr. Jerrold's fusillade is so constant that a reader may feel like Benedick when Beatrice attacked him,

huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyance upon me that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me. She speaks poniards and every word stabs.

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Mr. Jerrold's shots, however, seem to us fair enough, and, if they wound, the cause he pleads for is pressing and vital. But his attack would be too constantly clever if there was not good incident with exciting queries behind it. D'Alvarez, *rusé* and patient as he is, has his own trials and his chief opponent is a man of mark, much abler than his futile colleagues. Can the Royalists succeed with intractable material and choose the right time to take the inevitable risks? Will the new Queen, who is a woman as well as "the symbol of the continuity of history," be equal to playing her part? The final touch of irony is delightful.

DOWN IN THE VALLEY. By H. W. FREEMAN. Chatto and Windus.
7s. 6d.

IN his new book Mr. Freeman has changed his venue from East to West Suffolk, where he seems less at home. The story tells of one Everard Mulliver, sole proprietor of a prosperous grocery business in Bury St. Edmunds who, exasperated by the monotony of things, sallies forth in his car with the express purpose of getting drunk; but finds himself instead the purchaser, in all sobriety, of a tumble-down cottage, "a nice bit of garden and about thirty rod of orchard," together with the adventures thereto appertaining. These, frankly, do not amount to much.

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In place of the conscientious realism of "Joseph and his Brethren," involving much that was very far from pastoral in the popular sense of the word, yet acceptable because of the truth that was in it, we have a preposterously idyllic village peopled by a preposterously idyllic peasantry, where Everard develops a hereditary passion for "the land," and duly draws down upon himself the passionate regard of two susceptible young women. The husband of one is a peculiarly malignant horse-doctor, and we prepare ourselves for tragedy; but it does not come nigh us. Everything arranges itself in a manner as idyllic as the village, and as humdrum—save for a somewhat unheroic tussle with the horse-doctor—as the simple humour of the villagers. No serious attempt at characterization can, indeed, be detected.

On the other hand, the author has a very real knowledge of, and love for, the flowers of field and hedgerow and the pageant of the countryside, and what action this story has is continually held up by descriptive passages of considerable beauty, alternating with expositions of such rustical arts as ferreting, hedging, ploughing, mowing, loading and the making of preserves from recipes long forgotten.

HERE IS THY VICTORY. By IRIS BARRY. Elkin Mathews & Marrot. 7s. 6d.

MISS BARRY has an excellent idea for this novel in dealing with the effect of the cessation of death. Her method is the one we associate with Mr. Wells: that of taking a little group of rather insignificant people placed at the centre of the phenomenon and working out the enormous results from their viewpoint. The gradual recognition of the importance of the fact that no deaths have been recorded over a wide area of England for many days, the exhilaration, then the panic of the idea that death has ceased—these things are worked out alongside the story of the little group of lives with consummate realism. The reviewer's desire was for something more spectacular. The characters were a dreary lot save for the rather lovable old registrar and his wife; and Miss Barry tends to dissipate her interest upon meaningless minor detail. One wondered whether her years of work as a film critic had infected her writing with this chief fault of the film medium. Wherever or however the trouble arose, we are held up for whole chapters at sewing parties and parish teas minutely observed and recorded, when we want to get on with the big theme of the book. In the last chapters Miss Barry recovers and stages an effective climax. We realize at last that the affair is of universal importance and not a matter of village gossip and insignificant lovers' quarrels. One admired the big idea and fumed at treatment which borders upon the pernicky.

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SPECIAL PROVIDENCE. By MARY AGNES HAMILTON, M.P. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

THIS is a war book in which war, save for a Zeppelin or two, bears no active part, but its moral aspect as a menace to humanity at large forms a background somewhat too sombre.

The story is almost exclusively concerned with the soul-searchings of a wife during the trial of her husband for the murder of his closest friend, and hers, for reasons which, to the world, seemed obvious enough; and her remorseful reconstruction of past scenes, punctuated by vivid snapshots of the actual progress of the trial, supplied by the puzzled but sympathetic girl friend in whose studio she is endeavouring to elude the attentions of the popular press, is astonishingly effective.

But pacificism is the keynote of the book. The case against war, as such, is throughout suggested with that complete lack of perspective which is consistently and eternally feminine, characterization and plot alike being subordinated to the main purpose.

Perhaps such frankly repulsive personalities as Harold Claviger's Lancashire relatives are conceivable among the "rough diamonds" of northern manufacture: but it may well be that the peculiar variety of war atmosphere insisted on by Mrs. Hamilton makes them seem so.

ILL WIND. By H. E. L. MELLERSH. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d.

THIS is a war story of unusual merit. Beginning in a country village with a group of girls and boys, the author seems likely to have taken on more material than he can conveniently manage. But one of the boys becomes the hero and the rest sink to minor parts. As a shy and clean-minded schoolboy who cannot talk to his mother or father, he goes into the war and is gradually educated into a man with the virtues of self-reliance and the power to find himself. He sees an American, who is his ideal as a soldier, married to his sister, but himself, on his return from the front, is jilted by the girl who had promised to marry him. The book ends with reflections on the war which do not strike us as particularly impressive. The author's strength lies for us in the vivid and lifelike details of the young hero's career, both in the stress of war and in the troubled world of home. The soldier's foul language is presented with the license which is usual to-day but which we cannot approve.

THE KNIFE BEHIND THE CURTAIN: TALES OF SECRET SERVICE AND CRIME. By VALENTINE WILLIAMS. Hodder and Stoughton. 7s. 6d.

SHORT thrillers, such as the stories provided here, do not please us so well as a continuous narrative. This is probably

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because the bare details of the thrill take most of the space and little room is left for humour or suggestions of character. Mr. Williams has, however, been bold enough in one story to make humanity and the claims of religion more important than the expected *dénouement*, and, in another, the narrator illustrates his own character with an unconscious irony which is delightful. Popular sentiment is not allowed to dictate a happy ending to the story of a courageous spy in German hands.

The collection suggests that the author's talents are meant for better things than the magazine story we read in the train.

THE CASTLE. By FRANZ KAFKA. Translated from the German by WILLIAM and EDWIN MUIR. Secker. 7s. 6d.

FRANZ KAFKA, who died of consumption at 42 in 1925, was regarded by German critics as one of the most striking writers of his generation, and "The Castle," with its combination of mystery and crude humanity, is certainly attractive as an allegory of the search after a higher law in the confusion of life. It begins very well with a young man coming to a village to take the post of Land Surveyor under the Castle authorities who rule the place. At once he is involved in endless mystery and uncertainty. He cannot get to the Castle; it appears that his appointment was a mistake; those who rule his destiny are vague and contradictory in the uncertain messages he gets; but their power is sufficient to keep him waiting at a loose end on the spot with a sense that he is unfairly treated. He sees immorality and selfishness in these mysterious agents and protests against them, while he believes in them. The book was left unfinished, but a friend of the writer is able to indicate the end in an appendix.

As the story proceeds, it gets lost in an interminable discussion of motives and small incidents which grows tedious. Perhaps the author, if he had lived to revise it, would have seen this. The description of the Castle authorities is most subtle. They give a sense of extraordinary ease in intercourse, mysterious as they are. Their vigilance and control are such that any error they seem to make may not, after all, be one, and the hero in their charge loses control of his thoughts in the mere effort to keep going, though he is man enough at times to shock his village neighbours by asserting his right to independent action. It is, as Mr. Muir says in his "Introductory Note," the allegory of a scepticism grounded on a final faith.

TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE.

THE SOUL OF PICARDY. By HENRY P. MASKELL. Benn. 12s. 6d.

PICARDY has its own character and attractions, as well as memories of the Somme, and Mr. Maskell, as a walker, took the

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best way of seeing the country at leisure. He writes very well, with the broadest of sympathies, and discerns a racial resemblance between Picardy and Sussex, both presumed to retain the manners of the Belgæ, who worried Cæsar. However that may be, the Picards abuse the Normans, just as we have heard a Sussex man call a Hampshire one a "New Forest thief," and these country folk of France take some knowing. But once appreciated, the visitor will find that extra touch of courtesy which seems particularly French—a pleasant reception and, perhaps, a special bottle. Sterne sentimentalized in this region, but was little concerned with architecture or the abundant interests Mr. Maskell dwells on. However, his Lafleur is recognized here as the typical valet of the local comedy, a rascal too engaging to be taken seriously. The Church of St. Vulfran at Abbeville is well known for its Gothic beauty, and only one of many fine examples, though the late flamboyant style may not appeal to everybody. The charm of the Somme has been illustrated by one of the best of our living landscape painters, and the ugly signs of war are being gradually covered up. Mr. Maskell notices both great things and small—the glorious but not very justifiable affair of Agincourt and the promoter of potatoes in France. He survives in the name of an omelette and has a statue at Montdidier but no mention in the Index, which might have been more inclusive.

THE ODYSSEY OF AN ORCHID HUNTER. By F. D. BURDETT. Herbert Jenkins. 18s.

ALL those who are interested in the less explored corners of the world will enjoy this book, with its record of a pioneer's wanderings in East Indian islands. For Mr. Burdett is more than an orchid hunter, and he has alternated the search for these beautiful and elusive flowers with pearl-fishing in tropic lagoons, and the exploration of active volcano-craters for payable deposits of sulphur. He has also seen something of gold-digging, and when his forty-foot pearling lugger went down under him in a tornado, he managed to survive the best part of two days and nights in a shark-infested sea, and three days more in a cockleshell of a boat without food and water and under a pitiless sun. He has watched the python-hunters of the Dusun tribe tackling these huge tree-snakes in single combat among the branches of the dense Borneo forests, and killing them with their knives by sheer quickness and skill.

Though the author records these and other exciting adventures by the way, he has also much to tell us about the natural history of the Philippine Islands, the customs and beliefs of the various native tribes, and the agricultural possibilities of these regions in

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the future. The picturesque episode of his blood-compact with the Chief of the Igorote head-hunters of Luzon (in which each participant gashes the arm of the other and drinks his blood) had, as the reader will see, a practical sequel; for it led to a reform in the ways of that turbulent people which greatly conduced to the peace of the island. No less dramatic, if in a different way, was his discovery (while searching for the mineral magnesite) of a little ravine literally carpeted with thousands upon thousands of blossoms of that loveliest of orchids *Phalæanopsis*—or, to give it its more fanciful Spanish name, *La Mariposa*, The Butterfly. Such a find as this must be unique in the annals of orchid-hunting, for Mr. Burdett tells us that he sent no less than forty-seven thousand of these exquisite plants to swell the collections of orchid growers the world over. No wonder he reckons this flower-haunted glen among his most cherished and indelible memories.

There are many other interesting things in this straightforward and unassuming record of adventures by land and sea, and its well-chosen photographs, brief index, and handy map of the Philippine Islands, all deserve a word of commendation. To the city-dweller who pines for the country Mr. Burdett's book will be as welcome as a fragrant breeze from the open spaces.

GENERAL.

A WRITER'S NOTES ON HIS TRADE. By C. E. MONTAGUE. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

PUBLISHED and praised by leading critics in an expensive edition, this book is now available in a cheaper form for more ordinary persons. It discusses with admirable wit and happy imagery the problems which face an artist in writing, and Montague's views as a first-rate craftsman himself should attract wide attention. He pleads for the rights of a living language which takes on slang and particularly simple vernacular phrases which are vivid and easily understood. Such are combinations with the word "do," like "do in" and "do down." Here, we remark, is one of the puzzles of language. English once had all the following words made out of "do" with prepositions, "doff," "dout," "dup," and "don," and all are gone from current speech. We quite agree that unlettered speakers may reach a vividness unknown to "literary" writing, but in more ornamental and imaginative novelties of language English of all sorts has become torpid. It has to go to America, still in the Elizabethan stage of free invention, and producing "sky-scrapers" like the "cloud-capt towers" of the *Tempest*.

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We notice an acute and searching analysis of the different styles of the drama and the novel and an interesting discussion of the ways in which the latter can be made, by building up on a bare skeleton, or making and reducing a large formless block, which was the method of Henry James. Conrad's involved way of telling a story, which delayed his recognition for many years, cannot be commended, but the protest against a dull bareness of fact, which shuns all the play of suggestion in the region of things half seen but none the less felt, is effective. The essays on 'Easy Writing, Hard Reading' and 'Doing Without Workmanship' are poignantly pertinent to-day. We hope that writers and critics alike will notice the remarks on "this long post-war interlude of immobility and middlingness" and the defence of the "representative artist," who is still creating when he is representing.

The book ends with a discussion of the mystery which allows man, in Browning's words, the gift

That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star.

Why do a few simple words touch us so deeply? That charm psychology has not solved, but Montague goes some way toward fixing and describing the sensations that visit us while it is at work.

BOROBUDUR. Six Etchings by JAN POORTENAAR, with an Introduction by DR. N. J. KROM. Luzac. £6 6s.

ONE of the most fascinating chapters in Mr. Jan Poortenaar's book, "An Artist in the Tropics" was concerned with the ancient temple of the Borobudur in Java, and those of us who were intrigued by his verbal description of this greatest of Javanese monuments welcome the opportunity of getting his visual impressions in this portfolio of six etchings. Connoisseurs and collectors will welcome it from another angle, seeing it either as pure art or an investment, as their taste or cupidity dictates. Students and archaeologists again will find in Mr. Poortenaar's graver and Professor Krom's explanatory introduction a sufficient guide to this eighth-century masterpiece of architecture and sculpture. Whatever our approach, this handsome portfolio deserves high praise. If we complain, it is that here and there the etchings lack clarity of line owing to the smallness of their scale; but usually the artist's selectiveness has kept them clear. Mr. Poortenaar makes us feel something of the religious awe which this temple aroused in him, yet he never sacrifices artistic values for literary ones as the topographical artist is so often tempted to do. As Mr. Laurence Binyon says in his Foreword to the portfolio: "One cannot look at these prints without feeling

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that the artist has seen this wonderful monument of Eastern art not merely as a picturesque relic and for the sake of its architectural effects of light and shade, but with a sympathetic appreciation of its religious significance." This portfolio is a happy result of that understanding and Mr. Poortenaar's powers as an etcher.

ADVENTURES IN LIVING DANGEROUSLY. By LOUIS GOLDING. Mitchell Kennerley. 2s. 6d.

THIS is one of the booklets of some 50 pages which the publishers affect. Mr. Golding explains that he has sought danger everywhere in vain, finding murderers kindly and the thugs of Chicago unwilling to oblige with a revolver at the right moment. He is courageous because three fortune-tellers in different countries have all agreed about a particular death for him. Apart from the strange adventure at the end in a German restaurant, he records a series of disappointments, but it is all very cleverly and knowingly done with a good sense of colour and detail.

THE NURSERY SCHOOL. By MARGARET McMILLAN. Dent. 3s. 6d.

THE re-issue of this book coincides with the opening by the Queen of the Rachel McMillan training institute for children at Deptford. It is a record of splendid work, carried through by devoted women in spite of all discouragements and difficulties and now recognized as of first-rate importance. Nursery schools are no longer in the experimental stage. The creation of open-air work and play has made it possible to do away with rickets and other handicaps of the slums and send children to school with the normal benefits of health and strength.

EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY—PEREGRINE PICKLE. 2 vols. MOLL FLANDERS. Dent. 2s. each vol.

IT seems somewhat surprising that Smollett's well-known book should have waited so long for inclusion, but he is not everybody's author and his heroes have a way of turning out to be cads, if not ruffians. Defoe gave none of the juicy detail a prurient modern would apply to his Moll. Her marital adventures are a pretty fair mixture of deceit on both sides. She takes the moral point of view throughout and ends with a husband "in good heart and health," resolved to indulge in sincere penitence for past wickedness.

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